AN

ESSAY

UPON THE

HARMONY OF LANGUAGE,

INTENDED

PRINCIPALLY TO ILLUSTRATE

THAT OF THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

Προῆλθε δὲ τὸ μέτρον ἐκ Θεῦ, μέτρῳ τά τε οὐράνια καὶ ἐπίγεια κεκοσμηκεν Θ.· ἁρμονία γάρ τίς ἐστι καὶ τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις καὶ ἐπιγείοις.

LONGIN. *Fragm.*

Οὐ μόνον ἐστὶ πειθοῦς καὶ ἡδονῆς ἡ ἁρμονία φυσικὸν ἀνθρώποις ἐργανον, ἀλλὰ καὶ, μετ' ἐλευθερίας, καὶ πάθους θαυμαστόν τι ὄργανον.

LONGIN. *de Sublim.*

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ERRORS of the PRESS.

Page 10, *line* 14, *efface* "
29, 18, *for* two ſecondary *read* at leaſt two
61, 5, *for* this *read* his
78, 3, for *feſtevity* read *feſtivity*
87, 22, *for* σχήμαμα *read* σχηματα
94, 5, *in the word* sūbjéct *effaſe the accent*
9, *for* ſubjêct *read* ſubjéct
138, 1, *for* middle the *read* middle of the
189, 15, *for* des *read* odes
202, 15, *for* accented *read* unaccented
222, 9, for *ſe d accentus, quoque* read *ſed accentus quoque,*
223, 27, *for* agreeable *read* agreeably
257, 23, *for* arts *read* art
266, 4, *for* voice *read* verſe

There are ſome errors and more omiſſions of marks in the analyſed paſſages, but they are ſuch as the reader will eaſily correct without their being particularly pointed out to him.

AN ESSAY ON THE HARMONY of LANGUAGE.

SECTION I.

OF all the ſtudies, in which the moderns have profited from the works of the ancients, the ſmalleſt advances appear to have been made in that of the harmony of language. What remains from the ancients on the ſubject, ſeems to be red, not ſo much with admiration as with aſtoniſhment. None ſeem to have thought of applying it to the conſideration of the harmony of their native tongue; and though many very learned men have taken much pains to explain from it the harmony of the learned languages, yet they have been at laſt reduced to refer many things to fancied powers in ancient voices and

ancient ears, which really partake of the miraculous. Without ſuppoſing any ſuch extraordinary difference between ancient and modern, ſouthern and northern people, among whom the ſame arts and the ſame ſciences have been ſucceſsfully cultivated, the reaſon of that ſuperior regard which the ancients paid to every thing connected with the art of perſuaſion is too obvious to need mentioning: why they ſhould have ſuperior ability to underſtand the harmony of human ſpeech, is not ſo eaſily accounted for. The arts of perſuaſion have not been wholly neglected in modern times, and poetry has received a great ſhare of very ſucceſsful attention. One cannot therefore but wonder, that the powers of the harmony of language, ſo univerſally felt, ſhould be ſo little underſtood.

The preſent equality of all modern nations, in this knowlege, with regard to their own reſpective languages, ſeems, in a great meaſure, to bring to the ground the ſpeculations formed on the ſuppoſition of a wide difference, in the powers of ſenſation, between the people of the middle and thoſe of the ſouthern parts of Europe. It does not appear, that the harmony of Latin poetry is at all more felt, or better underſtood on the banks

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of the Tiber and the Arno, than on thoſe of the Seine and the Thames. The Engliſh and the Italian poetry are formed on the ſame model; and the harmony of both directed merely by the ear, as if incapable of being reduced to rule. This circumſtance, unaccountable as it appears in itſelf, ſufficiently accounts for that ignorance concerning the efficients of the harmony of language, which ſeems to ſubſiſt throughout Europe. It is from the verſification of every language that our knowledge of the firſt Rudiments of its harmony muſt be acquired. For as it is much eaſier to form an irregular geometrical figure, in which no certain dimenſions or proportions are demanded, than a right-angled triangle, a ſquare or a circle, yet impoſſible to learn its properties till thoſe of the regular figures are firſt known, ſo though it is much eaſier to compoſe proſe than verſe, yet the harmony of a language muſt be inveſtigated in the regularity of the ~~former~~ latter, before its properties can poſſibly be diſcerned among the anomalies of the ~~latter~~ former. In modern verſe we know, that a certain number of ſyllables is neceſſary, and a certain diſpoſition of the pauſe: every thing elſe is left intirely to the ear, and in ſome meaſure theſe alſo. Yet we can readily perceive, in Engliſh and Italian poetry, a regular and agree-

able harmony, which evidently depends upon ſomething more, and ſomething more eſſential than the mere number of ſyllables and the pauſe. This has been ſo far obſerved, that ſome attempts have been lately made at a farther illuſtration of Engliſh proſody, but unſatisfactory all of them in the higheſt degree.

A queſtion may poſſibly here ariſe with ſome, What advantage will reſult from a farther inveſtigation of the harmony of our ſpeech? Elegant compoſitions appeared, in every branch of learning, long before the mode of compoſition for each particular branch was ſettled. Grammarians and critics are formed by great writers, not great writers by critics and grammarians; whoſe works tend rather to cramp true genius, which needs no ſuch aſſiſtance, than to enable inferior parts to excel. The harmony of the Greek language, we know, was carried to its higheſt perfection in the works of Homer, long before any ſyſtem of proſody, or indeed any proſe compoſition whatſoever, was extant: and is it now propoſed to teach future Engliſh poets to excel the numbers of Milton and of Pope?

This reaſoning is ſpecious and faſhionable, but very inconcluſive. In anſwer I would aſk, Were Ariſtotle, Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, and Longinus,

ginus, leſs great writers for being great critics? Did the ſtudy of the harmony of their reſpective languages nothing avail Demoſthenes and Cicero? Did Xenophon and Cæſar apply themſelves ſo cloſely to it without contributing any thing to their own fame, or to the information and delight of after-times? Have later ages been moſtly deficient in equally great commanders, or in commanders who could equally well tranſmit their own actions to poſterity? Speech is moreover ſo noble, and ſo diſtinguiſhing a gift of our Creator that any inquiry concerning it, merely as an object of curioſity, is intereſting. It is even diſgraceful to remain ignorant of cauſes which ſeemingly cannot be very deeply hidden, and whoſe effects are ſo obvious, ſo powerful, and of ſuch daily experience. We are I know in theſe northern climates accuſed, and even apt to accuſe ourſelves of a dulneſs of ſenſe, little capable of being affected by the powers of harmony. Nay ſo inclined are we to this ſelf-abuſe, that the writings of ſome may induce poſterity, admiring the mild and pleaſant climate of the ſouth of England, to wonder how it happened, that in the eighteenth century the ſun never ſhone there. The obſervation of Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus however certainly holds with us: "Either verſe

or

or proſe, he ſays, which is deficient in harmony, loſes in a great meaſure the advantage of all other merit. For, as the moſt excellent conceptions of a writer are uſeleſs to the world, unleſs he can expreſs them in ſuitable terms, ſo the ſtrongeſt, moſt accurate, and moſt elegant terms will loſe their effect, if awkwardly connected in inharmonious ſentences." This not only holds with us, but has lately been experienced in a very eminent degree. It is univerſally acknowledged, that for the avidity with which the tracts, not long ago publiſhed in the news papers, under the ſignature of Junius, were received, the author was chiefly indebted to the ſtrength of his expreſſions, embelliſhed by the harmony of his periods.

To proceed then. Whoever has adverted to the ſubject propoſed to be treated in the following pages, and obſerved the ſtrange contradictions of moſt of the modern writers who have touched upon it, and the total inconcluſiveneſs of all of them, may perhaps incline to think it incapable of being treated with ſyſtematical preciſion. What diſputes will he find to have ſubſiſted throughout Europe concerning the harmony of the Greek and Latin languages? diſputes relating immediately indeed to thoſe languages in particular,

particular, and principally the Greek, but, in the end, regarding human ſpeech in general: and though the ſubject ſeems exhauſted, the learned are not agreed. If he turns to our own language, what contrariety of opinions, and how inconcluſive and unſatisfactory all of them? What a variety of contradictory anſwers may he receive to this ſimple queſtion, Whence ariſes the harmony of our verſe? And where will he find complete information according to any one ſyſtem whatever? Some will tell him that quantity, others that accent, is the principal efficient of our poetical harmony. Some affirm that there is no ſuch thing as quantity in our language; and moſt hold that what quantity we have is always determined by accent: others again tell us that it ſometimes is ſo, and ſometimes not; but all are much at a loſs to explain this point intelligibly. Some have indeed gone ſo far as to divide our verſe into feet, and have called thoſe feet by Greek names; but this they have done quite arbitrarily, without reference to any rule, and indeed in a manner incapable of being reduced to rule. It appears ſtrange that in a matter concerning which one ſhould on firſt view, imagine every one's ear would enable him to determine, opinions ſhould be ſo uncertain and ſo divided.

If

If from this aſtoniſhing jargon of the moderns he turns to the ancients, and examines attentively what remains to us from them on the ſubject of poetical and rhetorical harmony, he will find a conſiſtency, a clearneſs, and a preciſion, which will probably very much, as well as very agreeably ſurpriſe him. It will immediately ſtrike him, that they uſed terms, the meaning of which was accurately fixt, and well known; thoſe very terms which have been adopted by the moderns, but uſed in ſuch a manner as to convey very confuſed ideas of what ſeldom appears to have been clearly conceived by the writer himſelf. And he will in the end find great reaſon to think that the ancients not only fully underſtood the harmony of their reſpective languages, but that this knowlege was founded on a clear inſight into the nature of the harmony of human ſpeech in general; of which, if any moderns have had any accurate ideas, the information at leaſt, which their writings give, is very unſatisfactory and obſcure.

I muſt beg my readers not haſtily to impute arrogance to me for ſuppoſing myſelf capable of what ſo many men of great parts, and great learning have failed in. There ſeems reaſon ſufficient

why

why they could not ſucceed. I never heard of ſo much as an attempt to explain ſyſtematically the harmony of any modern language, and until ſome ſuch attempt has been brought to ſucceſs, all endeavours to explain the harmony of the ancient languages muſt fail, for want of an exemplar, by which every circumſtance may be illuſtrated. It is my purpoſe not to attempt ſurmounting difficulties which have been inſuperable to my betters, but to avoid them by taking another road. The ancients have left us, interſperſed in their writings, large and accurate information concerning the general harmony of human ſpeech. I imagine that an attentive view of this information will enable us to acquire a clear inſight into the particular harmony of our native tongue; that this again will contribute to aſcertain and perfect our ideas of the general harmony of human ſpeech, and when clear notions are acquired of both theſe, it will not be difficult to underſtand whatever has been accurately written concerning the harmony of any other language.

SECT.

SECT. II.

MUSIC is commonly called the Siſter of Poetry, and it has been held by ſome great authorities, that Muſic was the elder Siſter. Thus Lucretius:

> At liquidas avium voces imitarier ore
> Ante fuit multo quam lævia carmina cantu
> Concelebrare homines poſſent, aureiſque juvare.
>
> V. 1378.

whichever of the two arts is the elder, and whenceſoever they were derived, they have certainly features ſtrongly indicative of the ſame origin. The two firſt eſſentials of the harmony of human ſpeech, enumerated by Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, are the two firſt eſſentials of modern "muſic, μέλος, *melody*, and ῥυθμὸς, which the Latins call *numeri*, and which in its largeſt ſenſe may perhaps be moſt nearly expreſſed in Engliſh by the word *cadence*, though in ſpeaking of muſic only, we call it *the time*.

To the ſweetneſs of language Dionyſius in another place enumerates three eſſentials: agreeable

able melody, agreeable cadence, and agreeable articulation, εὐμέλεια, εὐρυθμία, εὐφωνία. The articulation of a language, φωνία, is analogous to the ſound of a muſical inſtrument; and as an ill-toned inſtrument, a harſh fiddle for inſtance, may have great muſical powers, and a ſweet inſtrument, as a ſoft flute, very confined powers only, ſo a language of ſoft and ſweet articulation may have very little poetical or rhetorical harmony, and a harſh language a great deal. It is to ſweetneſs of articulation that the French and Italians have chiefly attended in improving the ſound of their languages. My purpoſe will lead me to treat only of the proper efficients of the muſic of ſpeech, melody and cadence. Euphony is but an embelliſhment of theſe; though it muſt be owned, like a good tone to a muſical inſtrument, ſo eſſential an embelliſhment, that without ſome degree of it the others loſe all their value.

Melody then, in language, ariſes from the various tones of the voice, which are called accents. *Cadence* is determined by the quantity of time employed in the pronunciation of ſyllables; whence ariſes a third incident to the harmony

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of human ſpeech called *meter*, or *meaſure*, *menſura*, μέτρον.

Cadence and meter are thus accurately diſtinguiſhed by Quintilian *: 'All compoſition, 'men-

* Omnis ſtructura, ac dimenſio & copulatio vocum conſtat, aut numeris (numeros ῥυθμοὺς accipi volo) aut μέτρῳ, id eſt dimenſione quadam. Quod etiam ſiconſtat utrunque pedibus, habet tamen ſimplicem differentiam. Nam rhythmi, id eſt numeri, ſpatio temporum conſtant: metra etiam ordine: ideoque alterum eſſe quantitatis videtur; alterum qualitatis. Ῥυθμὸς aut par eſt, ut dactylus: unam enim ſyllabam parem brevibus habet (eſt quidem vis eadem et aliis pedibus, ſed nomen illud tenet: longam eſſe duorum temporum, brevem unius etiam pueri ſciunt) aut ſeſcuplex, ut paeon, cujus vis eſt ex longa, & tribus brevibus; quique eſt ei contrarius ex tribus brevibus et longa; vel alio quoque modo tempora tria ad duo relata ſeſcuplum faciunt: Aut duplex, ut iambus; nam eſt ex brevi & longa, quique ei eſt contrarius. Sunt hi & metrici pedes: ſed hoc intereſt, quod rhythmo indifferens eſt dactyluſne ille priores habeat breves, an ſequentes: tempus enim ſolum metitur, ut a ſublatione at poſitionem iiſdem ſit ſpatiis pedum. In verſu pro dactylo poni non poterit anapæſtus aut ſpondeus; nec pæon eadem ratione a brevibus incipiet ac deſinet. Inſt. orat. ix. 4.

There is alſo in a fragment of Longinus an explanation of the difference between rhythmus and meter; too brief to be perhaps at this day very intelligible without the aſſiſtance of Quintilian's more diffuſe explanation, but

'menſuration, and connection of ſounds depends 'either upon cadence, which the Latins call 'numeri, and the Greeks ῥυθμοὶ, or upon meter, 'μέτρον, that is, ſome certain meaſure. Now 'tho' both conſiſt of feet, yet have they a 'ſimple difference. Rhythmus, or cadence 'depends on mere ſpace of time, meter upon 'the order of times: to the former therefore 'quantity of time only is incident; to the 'latter quality alſo. Rhythmus is either even, 'as in the dactyl, which has one long ſyllable 'equal to two ſhort ones, (other feet have the 'ſame power, but that is the prevailing name, 'and even boys know that a long ſyllable 'conſiſts of two times a ſhort ſyllable of one) 'or it is ſeſcuple, as in the pæon, compoſed of 'one long ſyllable and three ſhort ones, or, 'on the contrary, of three ſhort and one long, 'or of three times added to two in any other 'manner

but with that help ſufficiently plain to ſhow that the two critics meant the ſame thing: Διαφέρει δὲ Μέτρου Ρυθμοῦ ὕλη γὰρ τοῖς μέτροις ἡ συλλαβὴ, καὶ χωρὶς συλλαβῆς οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο Μέτρον. Ὁ δὲ Ῥυθμὸς γίνεται μὲν καὶ ἐν συλλαβαῖς, γίνεσθαι δὲ καὶ χωρὶς συλλαβῆς· καὶ γὰρ ἐν κρόῳ. *Meter differs from rhythmus: for meter is formed of ſyllables; and without ſyllables can be no meter. But rhythmus may exiſt either in ſyllables or without them; as in beating time.*

'manner, ſo that the whole being divided into 'two parts, one may exceed the other in length 'by one half: or it is double as in the iambic 'compoſed of one ſhort ſyllable and one long 'one, and its contrary. Theſe are metrical 'feet alſo; but in this they differ, that it mat-'ters not to the rhythmus whether the dactyl 'have the two firſt ſyllables ſhort, or the 'two laſt; for the time only is meaſured, ſo 'that the beatings may be at equal diſtance. 'But in verſe an anapeſt or a ſpondee will not 'anſwer the purpoſe of a dactyl; nor is it indif-'ferent whether a pæon begins or ends with the 'ſhort ſyllables.

We here find rhythmus anſwering exactly to the diviſions of time in modern muſic, only that to the common and triple, which Quintilian calls even and double, the ſeſcuple is added, which in our muſic would be a bar conſiſting of five equal notes.*

It

* Dr. Foſter, in a very learned treatiſe, of which much notice will be taken in the ſequel, gives another explanation of the word ῥυθμὸς. "In its ſtrictly muſical and metrical ſignification," he ſays, "it relates merely to the diviſion of time in verſe alone.——The rhetorical ſenſe of the word includes much more." This *much more* he explains to be the general harmony of a verſe or period reſulting from all the conſtituents of harmony together; and

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It is evident, that in order to underſtand the nature of the rhythmus of any piece of poetry or proſe, we muſt be acquainted with the proportionate quantity of time employed in the pronunciation of every ſyllable. On firſt view it might be imagined, that for this the ear would be a ſufficient guide. It appears that wtih the Greeks and Romans it really was ſo; but with all modern Europeans, it ſhould ſeem not. In our own language, in particular, it is not at all agreed what ſyllables are long or what ſhort, or what it is that makes a ſyllable long or ſhort. With regard to the Greek and Latin, great pains are taken at our public ſeminaries to teach what ſyllables were eſteemed long or ſhort

in this enlarged ſenſe he ſays the word is uſed by Ariſtotle and Cicero. I have myſelf never found the word ῥυθμὸς uſed in any other than the very confined ſignification above aſſigned to it by Quintilian, except by Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, who in the beginning of his obſervations upon meter, declares that he ſhall uſe the words *rhythmus* and *foot* as ſynonimous terms. Rhythmus, as defined by Quintilian, is always the general foundation of the harmony of every proſe period, as well as of every verſe, and hence might ariſe the miſconception, that it is ſometimes uſed by ancient writers, to imply the general reſult of the various efficients of the harmony of language.

ſhort by the ancients; but no one undertakes to inſtruct how to make the difference in pronunciation, ſo that it may be ſenſible to the ear. We are in general only told, that if we do not give the ſtrong *accent* to the proper ſyllable in all polyſyllabic words, we make *falſe quantity*; a poſition rather paradoxical in itſelf, and founded on no authority of the ancients.

The diſputes to which this confounding of accent with quantity gave riſe, and which have ſubſiſted among the learned throughout Europe now above a century, are well known, tho what has been printed on both ſides is little red. The ſubject is however ſo nearly related to that of the following ſheets, that it may not be improper here to give a ſummary account of it, which I ſhall the rather do becauſe I ſhall have frequent occaſion in the ſequel to mention a very learned eſſay, the laſt to which it has given birth.

In learning the pronunciation of any foreign language, the accentuation is ever found the greateſt difficulty. Upon this account in moſt modern dictionaries, and particularly thoſe intended for the inſtruction of foreigners, the place

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of the principal accent in all polyſyllables is marked. It is well known that the Greek language became, after the Macedonian conqueſt, the moſt univerſally ſpoken of any that ever exiſted; that it continued ſo for many ages; and that it was equally the language of the learned, the polite, and the commercial. From that time therefore there was greater occaſion for marking in books every particularity of the pronunciation of that language than of any other. Accordingly a very learned grammarian of the Alexandrine ſchool, zealous to tranſmit to poſterity the true pronunciation of his language, the moſt harmonious ever ſpoken, invented thoſe marks of accentuation which came in time into general uſe, and are found in moſt of the Greek manuſcripts which have been preſerved to our days. Theſe marks were long eſteemed invaluable keys to the harmony of that admirable tongue. The true uſe of them was well known to thoſe Greeks, whoſe memory deſerves all reverence, who upon the final overthrow of the eaſtern empire, brought their language and learning into the weſt, where they were ſo nobly patronized by that magnificent and judicious friend of the muſes pope Leo X. But in proceſs of time, when theſe Greeks were no more, and their

inſtructions concerning the pronunciation of their language forgotten, it was obſerved that in the manner in which ſounds were regulated by thoſe accentual marks in the pronunciation of the weſtern and northern Europeans, the quantity was often vitiated. Nor was this all: for tho few pretended any longer to pronounce every ſyllable in Greek or Latin exactly according to the ancient quantity, yet every body could perceive an agreeable harmony in Latin verſe when ſpoken according to the common accentuation, which is ſupported by the irrefragable authority of Quintilian himſelf. When Greek verſe alſo was pronounced with the ſame accentuation, the ſame harmony reſulted; but when ſpoken according to the accentual marks, ſeldom was any harmony perceptible. Theſe circumſtances ſtartled many, and induced Iſaac Voſſius, a critic of conſiderable parts and learning, but whimſical, and fond of broaching new opinions, to diſpute in his treatiſe *De poematum cantu et viribus rhythmi*, the authenticity of thoſe marks. More than this, he propoſed the Latin manner of accentuation for the Greek language; not as a ſubſtitute for the true one loſt, but as the true one itſelf, tho the idea is ſo far from being ſupported by any autho-

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rity but his own fancy, that numberleſs paſſages of ancient authors flatly contradict it.

Here began that literary war which has ſubſiſted ever ſince in various parts of Europe, but which ſeems to be determined in this country, for the preſent at leaſt, much in the ſame manner in which matters of much greater conſequence are ſometimes decided: Dr. Foſter's eſſay in defence of the accentual marks went through a ſecond edition eight years ago, and remains yet unanſwered, ſeemingly becauſe unanſwerable; but the voters for the abolition of the accentual marks exceeding in number the voters for their uſe, they are daily growing more out of faſhion.

This whole diſpute has been plainly owing to vague and indeterminate notions concerning the nature of accent, which none of the diſputants but Dr. Foſter has ever attempted to define. To the ſame cauſe muſt be imputed the principal miſtakes of all who have written on Engliſh proſody, and their utter inability to form any ſyſtem for analyſing Engliſh verſe. Till however we can form ſome well founded ſyſtem of analyſis, we muſt not only remain in uncertainty concerning the efficients of harmony in

Engliſh

Engliſh poetry, but our general ideas of the harmony of human ſpeech muſt alſo neceſſarily be very inaccurate. To build therefore on a more ſolid foundation than thoſe who have treated of the harmony of the Engliſh language before me, I will lay before the reader Dr. Foſter's very accurate account of the nature and ſpecific differences of accent and quantity, the two main pillars of poetical and rhetorical harmony in all languages which have any conſiderable ſhare of ſuch harmony to boaſt of.

" It is evident that nature hath given the " voice a variety of tones, that gradually riſe or " fall above or below each other: This is the " firſt and grand diviſion of ſounds into *high*, " and *low*. In ſinging *many* of theſe are uſed; " in common diſcourſe and reading *fewer*. " Page 2.

" It is evident likewiſe, that the human " voice, like every wind-inſtrument, has a power " of *ſhortening* or *lengthening* any of thoſe ſounds " it utters.

" On the former diviſion of theſe ſounds " is founded what grammarians have called *accent*,

" *accent*, relating merely to the particular ele-
" vation or depreſſion of them on certain ſyllables:
" The marks of which are ′ for the elevation,
" ‵ for the depreſſion, and ˜ or ^ for the eleva-
" tion and depreſſion joined on the ſame ſyllable,
" forming what is called a circumflex, as the
" two when ſeparate are called the acute and the
" grave.

" On the latter diviſion is founded what is
" termed *Quantity*, regarding only the quantity
" of time taken up in expreſſing any of them.
" The delay of the voice in pronouncing them
" forms the long time marked thus ¯; the
" quickneſs of the voice in haſtening over them
" forms the ſhort one marked thus ˘.

" From hence it appears that both accent
" and quantity are equally founded in the very
" nature of the human voice, are neceſſary and
" inſeparable from it; that conſequently no lan-
" guage can, or ever could be pronounced
" without them, except you ſuppoſe a mono-
" tony and equability in the voice, the exiſtence
" of which it is very difficult to conceive. Ari-
" ſtoxenus accordingly ſays, " There is a kind
" of muſic in diſcourſe, ariſing from the ac-
" cent

" cent in words. For it is natural to raiſe and " ſink the tones of voice in ordinary ſpeech." " Page 9.

" There unavoidably muſt be accent, if the " voice has only two notes, and fewer than two " or three are hardly ever, I believe, uſed even " in ordinary diſcourſe. There muſt in ſhort, " be a comparative * highneſs and lowneſs of " ſound, except the voice has only the uſe of " a ſingle note, like a drum or a drone baſs. As " the riſe and fall of ſound prevents monotony, " which would give a deadneſs to human ſpeech, " accent is not improperly called in Diomedes, " *anima vocis*.

" There muſt be likewiſe quantity, except " you ſuppoſe the voice to dwell with a meaſure " of time ſo exactly equal, on all its ſyllables, as " would be exceedingly tireſome and offenſive " to

* Ipſa enim natura, quaſi modularetur hominum orationem, in omni verbo poſuit acutem vocem: nec una plus, nec a poſtrema ſyllaba citra tertiam. Cic. ad Brut. Orat. 18.

Eſt autem in omni voce utique acuta. Inſt. orat. lib. 1. cap. v.

Ut nulla vox ſine vocali, ita ſine accentu nulla. Diomedes. 2.

" to every ear, and contrary to that variety " which nature ſeems ſo much to delight in. " And accordingly Quintilian very truly ob- " ſerves, that we cannot avoid ſpeaking in long " and ſhort time. *Neque enim loqui poſſumus, niſi e " ſyllabis brevibus ac longis, ex quibus etiam pedes " fiunt. Lib.* ix. *cap.* 4 The conſequence of which, " is what he remarks in another place, *metrici " quidem pedes adeo reperiuntur in oratione, ut in " ea, frequentur non ſentientibus nobis, omnium ge- " nerum excidant verſus. Et contra nihil eſt proſa " ſcriptum, quod non redigi poſſit in quædam " verſiculorum genera.*

" To this diviſion of the meaſure of ſounds " may be eaſily referred that diſtinction of them " which Cicero has made, and which holds good, " not only in the Roman language, which he had " chiefly in view, but in every language, that is, " in the human voice itſelf : *mira eſt enim na- " tura vocis : cujus quidem e tribus omnino ſonis, " inflexo, acuta, gravi, tanta ſit et tam ſuavis " varietas perfecta in cantibus : eſt autem in dicendo " etiam quidam cantus obſcurior.* Cic. orat. 17.

" It may be remarked that accent, though " cloſely united with quantity, is not only di-

" ſtinct

" ſtinct from it, but in the formation of the
" voice really antecedent to it. The pitch, or
" height of the note is taken firſt, and then
" the continuance of it is ſettled: by the former
" of theſe, the accent is determined, by the
" latter, the quantity. So cloſely combined
" and inſeparably are theſe two things which
" have ſometimes been repreſented as utterly
" incompatible with each other; ſo diſtinct
" likewiſe are theſe, which at other times have
" occaſioned ſo much perplexity by being con-
" founded together. They depend but on
" *one* operation of the voice, belong but to one
" ſound; which ſound, though a ſingle *one*, is
" capable of menſuration two ways, in quantity
" of elevation, and degree of continuance.
" Height and length, though two relative
" things, do always ſubſiſt together in one
" ſubject.

" Theſe two things in ſound are very
" clearly diſtinguiſhed, and marked by Plutarch
" in his miſcellaneous works, where he ſays,
" three very minute things do neceſſarily ſtrike
" the ear at once, the tone or ſound itſelf, the du-
" ration of it, and the third thing to which they
" belong, the formation and articulation of
" the

" the letter or ſyllable. Αἰεὶ γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον
" τρία ἐλάχιϛα εἶναι τὰ πίπτοντα ἅμα εἰς τὴν
" ἀκοὴν, φθόγγον τε, καὶ χρόνον, καὶ συλλαβὴν ἢ
" γράμμα ------ὁμοῦ δὲ προβαινόντων ἅμα τὴν
" τῆς αἰσθήσεως ἐπιφορὰν ἀναγκαῖον ποιεῖσ-
" θαι. And having thus ſhewn their diſtinction
" and connection, he then declares thoſe per-
" ſons to be incompetent judges of ſound and
" ſpeech who cannot perceive the difference
" between them: Ἀλλὰ μὴν κἀκεῖνο φανερὸν,
" ὅτε ἂν ἐνδέχεϛαι, μὴ δυναμένης της αἰσθήσεως
" χωρίζειν ἕκαϛον τῶν εἰρημένων, παρακολυθεῖν
" τε δύνασθαι τοις καθ' ἕκαϛα, καὶ συνορᾶν τὸ
" ϛαμαρλαινόμενον ἐν ἑκάϛῳ αὐτῶν καὶ τὸμὴ,---
" *Sed et hoc conſtat, quod niſi poſſit ſenſus diſ-*
" *cernere ſingula prædictorum, nequit fieri ut com-*
" *prehendat quod ad ſingula attinet, neque judicet*
" *quid in ſingulis aut pravum aut rectum ſit.*

Theſe three φθόγγος, χρόνος, συλλαβὴ, *tone, time,* and *ſyllable,* or ſuch a collection of elementary ſounds, as can be uttered by the voice at once, are the conſtituents of the three circumſtances of ſpeech mentioned by Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, μέλος, ῥυθμὸς, φωνία, *melody, cadence, articulation.* Dr. Foſter proceeds:

" As

" As ſpirit, or emphaſis hath been ſometimes " confounded with accent and quantity, I will " endeavour to point out its diſtinction from " the other two; that theſe three things may be " kept as ſeparate in the mind of the reader, " as they are in their own natures. This ſpirit is " in truth another meaſure of the voice, and is ſo " marked out by Scaliger, and added as a third " by him to the foregoing two. This diſtinction " cannot poſſibly be more clearly ſtated than in " Scaliger's own words. *Cum vocem quantitate* " *metiamur, et ſyllaba in voce ſit ut in ſubjecta* " *materia, et quantitas triplici dimenſione con-* " *ſtiticatur, longa, lata, alta, neceſſario quoque iiſdem* " *rationibus ſyllaba affecta erit ut levatio aut preſſio* " *in altitudine; afflatio aut attenuatio in latitudine;* " *tractus in longitudine ſit.* De cauſ. ling. Lat. " lib. II. cap. 52.

" The reader will here firſt obſerve, that Sca- " liger uſes the word *quantitas*, not as we com- " monly uſe it in the limited ſenſe, as relating " merely to the time or the length of a ſyllable, " but applies it to the height and the ſpirit " too: the whole quantity including all three.

" Priſcian's doctrine is the ſame as Scaliger's: Vox, dum tangit auditum, tripartite dividitur, " ſcilicet

" ſcilicet altitudine, latitudine, longitudine; ha-
" bet quidem litera altitudinem in pronunciati-
" one, latitudinem in ſpiritu, longitudinem in
" tempore." In regard to the nature of ſpirit, that
" which Scaliger means by the afflatio in latitu-
" dine, conſtitutes what we commonly call
" emphaſis; a mode of ſound requiring a greater
" profuſion of breath, giving either an aſpiration
" to a ſingle letter, or marking with peculiar ear-
" neſtneſs ſome particular ſentence in a diſcourſe,
" or ſome ſingle word in a ſentence; which
" yet is very diſtinct from accent and quantity,
" tho occaſionally joined with them."

SECT.

SECT. III.

THIS accurate explanation of the nature and ſpecific differences of accent and quantity is a great point gained, provided we can apply it to the known pronunciation of ſome living language. Without that it will avail nothing, and here Dr. Foſter leaves us intirely to ſeek. What therefore he has left undone I muſt endeavour to ſupply, by explaining the particular nature of accent and quantity in the Engliſh language.

It is obvious that in Engliſh pronunciation every polyſyllable has one ſyllable diſtinguiſhed by peculiar ſtrength of tone. This ſtrong tone is commonly called by way of eminence *the accent*. The ſituation of this accent is not determinable by any certain rules. Dr. Johnſon has indeed collected ſome in the grammar prefixed to his dictionary; but he does not propoſe them as complete or infallible, though perhaps the beſt that can be given. This however is not a point of much conſequence while our language continues to be ſpoken as it is at preſent; the

place

place of the accent being, except in a very few words, ſufficiently determined by cuſtom, and well known. It is moreover, in moſt of our dictionaries, accurately marked.

The ſyllables which receive not this ſtrong accent are ſo much leſs powerfully offered to the ear, that they are commonly called *unaccented*, tho' accent is really inſeparable from every ſyllable that is uttered.

But in the Engliſh pronunciation of polyſyllables, we find more than this one variety in the ſtrength of the accent. Every triſſyllable, with the ſtrong accent on the firſt, has the laſt uttered with a tone very ſenſibly ſtronger than that of the ſecond, as in *cónfidènt*: and when the laſt has the ſtrong accent, the firſt has a ſtronger tone than the ſecond, as in *èntertáin*. Every word of four and five ſyllables has two ſecondary diſtinguiſhing accents, as in *órdinàry*, *detèrminátion*; and thoſe of ſix ſyllables, or more, have more accents in proportion; as in *ìnterrógatòry*, *inſenſibílity*, *èxcommùnicátion*. Monoſyllables have ſometimes the ſtrong accent, ſometimes the weak, ſometimes neither, according to their ſituation and conſequence in a ſentence. Diſſyllables have alſo

alſo ſometimes the weak accent only, and in proſe ſometimes none. In proſe the ſecondary accent of triſſyllables is alſo ſometimes nearly annihilated.

The Greek diſtinctions of acute, grave, and circumflex, might, I think, with ſufficient propriety, be applied to the accents of Engliſh pronunciation. But it is more uſual with us to ſpeak of ſyllables merely as accented, or unaccented; that is, as being marked by a peculiar ſtreſs of the voice, or not being ſo marked; and this diſtinction I ſhall adopt as the better ſuited to my future purpoſes. For a mark then of the ſtrong, or principal accent, I ſhall uſe the common ſign of the acute: for the weak, or inferior diſtinguiſhing accents, I ſhall uſe the common ſign of the grave: and all ſyllables that receive neither of theſe, but paſs unmarked by any ſtreſs of the voice, I ſhall, under the ſanction of common cuſtom, call *unaccented*, and leave them unmarked.

Accent being nothing more than the tone of the voice, ſimple in its nature, and ſtriking to the dulleſt ſenſe, its principal variations are little liable to miſapprehenſion; nor do I know that, where quantity is out of the queſtion, any ma-

terial

terial miſtakes are commonly made about it. It's more minute modifications, by which pronunciation is more or leſs muſical or emphatical, or which take place on particular occaſions, but do not affect the general harmony of the language, are indeed almoſt infinite, but regard not our preſent purpoſe.

Quantity is in its origin more complex. It depends either upon vowel-ſounds only, or upon the connection of vowels with conſonants. To acquire complete knowledge of the particular nature of Engliſh quantity, it will therefore be abſolutely neceſſary to conſider with ſome minuteneſs the number and nature of the vowel-ſounds in our language, and with what degree of accuracy they are expreſſed by our vowel-marks. Their peculiarities are little obſerved by thoſe who know no pronunciation but their own, yet ſtriking to foreigners, * and thoſe who are acquainted with foreign tongues; and a review of theſe peculiarities will not only help us in our inquiry concerning

* Ed ecco la ſpiegazione dell' alfabeto (Ingleſe) finita; che ſpero non iſpaventerà il leggitore Italiano, quantunque preſenti a ſuoi occhi, dirò così, una montagna ſcabra e di malagevoliſſima ſalita. Barretti's Engliſh grammar.

concerning Engliſh proſody, but alſo aſſiſt in detecting our groſſer errors concerning the pronunciation of the learned languages. I am aware that this review will appear trifling, and perhaps even puerile to ſome; tedious and dry to all. It is however abſolutely neceſſary to our purpoſe, and, if euphony be deſirable in a language, the ſubject is of conſequence enough to deſerve ſome attention on its own account.

"*A*," ſays Dr. Johnſon, in the Grammar prefixed to his Dictionary, "has three ſounds; the "ſlender, as in *face*, *creation*, the open, as in "*father*, *fancy*, and the broad as in *all*, *call*."

"The *a* ſlender is the proper Engliſh *a*, called "very juſtly by Erpennius, *a* Anglicum cum *e* "miſtum." It is perhaps always properly long, being the uſual ſhort ſound of *e* lengthened. In the words *any*, *many*, and the terminations of longer words in *any*, it is commonly in converſation pronounced ſhort; but in theſe inſtances the ſound of *a* open is alſo uſed, and perhaps more proper.

A open is the uſual ſhort *a*. It is long in *father*, *after*, *ſlander*, and in *dance*, *enhance*, *advance*, and ſome other words formerly ſpelt with *au*.

A broad

A broad is always long, having the power of the dipthong *au*.

E has two ſounds: one ſhort as in *mĕn*, *ſĕpa-rate*; the other long when accented, *adhēring*, but generally ſhort when unaccented, being the ſame with the ſhort *i*, *rĕvĕring*. In a few proper names it uſurps before *r* the ſound of a open, *Derby*, *Berkſhire*; and in *where*, *there*, that of a ſlender, which is its own firſt-mentioned ſhort ſound lengthened.

Our long ſound of *i* is peculiar to our pronunciation, and incapable of being ſhortened. It is a kind of diphthong, which our ſouthern neighbours expreſs neareſt, when they have occaſion to do it in writing, by the letters *ai*. The ſound of our dipthong *oi* has ſuch an affinity to *i* long, that our poets ſeldom ſcruple coupling them as rimes, and it is very uſual in converſation to ſound the *oi* in many words ſimply as *i* long. The French and Italian *ai* is a ſound between *oi* proper, and *i* long; more open than this, leſs ſo than the other. In ſome words derived from the French, *i* has the long ſound of *e*, *pique*, *machine*.

The ſhort *i* is the long *e* ſhortened. *I* preceded by *c* or *t*, and followed by a vowel, has no

vowel-ſound, except in a very few inſtances where it is accented, but the *ci*, and *ti* have the ſound of *ſh*.

O has one general long ſound as in *bone*. In *move*, *tomb*, and ſome others, it uſurps the ſound of *oo*; and that of *a* broad, or *au* in *gone*, and before *ſs* and *ſt*, as in *loſs*, *croſs*, *poſterity*, *apōſtŏlic*.

The accented ſhort *o* is *a* broad ſhortened, as in *rock*: the unaccented is a contraction of the proper long *o*. The words *córporate*, *philóſopher*; exhibit both the ſhort ſounds of *o*.

Our general long ſound of *u* is the ſame with the Italian, and with our *oo*, as in *ruby*, *ruler*: but it is ſometimes an improper diphthong, being pronounced like *iu*, or *ioo*, as in *fury*, *confuſion*, *uſury*, *futurity*.

U, beſide the proper long ſound contracted, as in *full*, *put*, has a ſhort ſound to which we have no correſpondent long one, as in *dull*, *but*. It is a common remark that all northern people uſe a cloſer pronunciation than thoſe of the ſouthern countries. The Engliſh in particular, though poſſeſſed of all the nobleſt long vowel-

ſounds

ſounds, greatly affect ſhort ones. Now this peculiar ſhort ſound of the *u* is produced with the leaſt opening of the mouth, and the leaſt effort of the voice of any genuine vowel-ſound whatſoever, and it ſeems to be on this account that we give it, on certain occaſions, to all the other vowels, *particular*, *perverſe*, *her*, *ſtir*, *ſon*, *word*, to the three firſt before the letter *r* only, but to the laſt before many others, *come*, *cover*, *mother*, *ſon* *.

There is another, a kind of baſtard ſound, very nearly reſembling this, which we very frequently give to the letter *a*. It may be remarked in the following words in the ſyllables diſtinguiſhed by peculiar characters, *ſeparate*, *ſyllable*, *capable*, *mortal*, *acute*. This ſound is never given to the letter *a* in ſyllables which receive the ſtrong accent. The reaſon of this we ſhall mention in the ſequel. The vowel-ſound, which we uſe in ſyllables compoſed of *le* and a preceding conſonant, is nearly of the ſame kind, but degenerated to almoſt nothing.

Theſe

* The negative particle *un* is always ſhort, as in *unable*, *unequal*. The ſame ſyllable when derived from the Latin *unus* is always long with the ſecond long ſound, as in *unity*, *univerſal*, *diſunite*. The Engliſh pronunciation of vowels is too irregular to admit many ſuch general rules of quantity.

Theſe inaccuracies in pronunciation we ſeem to have derived from our Saxon anceſtors. Dr. Hickes obſerves in the firſt chapter of his Saxon grammar that "Comparativa apud eos (Anglo-"ſaxonas,) indifferenter exeunt in ar, ær, er, "ir, or, ur, yr, et ſuperlativa in aſt, æſt, eſt, iſt, "oſt, uſt, yſt; participia præſentis temporis in "and, ænd, end, ind, ond, und, ynd, præteriti "vero in ad, æd, id, od, ud, yd, pro vario "ſcilicet vel ævi, vel loci dialecto." Upon various other occaſions alſo they uſed two or more vowels and diphthongs indifferently, and this not always from difference of age or place, becauſe theſe variations are frequently found in the ſame page. This will account for the difference between the ſpelling and pronunciation of ſuch anomalous words as *buſy*, and *bury*, now pronounced as if written *biſy*, and *bery*, (the *i* and *e* having their common ſhort ſound) and formerly ſpelt indifferently with *e*, *u*, or *y*.

W and *y* have, as proper vowels, no powers but what are alſo poſſeſſed by *u*, and *i*.

From this review it appears that the name and figure of the letter are very uncertain guides to the ſound of our vowels; more ſo perhaps than in any other language. Not only our vowel-marks

are both inſufficient and redundant, but the ſame ſound when long and when ſhort is marked by different letters, and each letter ſtands for three or more different ſounds.

Our diphthongs have ſcarcely more regularity.

Ai, *ay*, and *au*, *aw*, have ſingle ſounds; the two firſt that of *a* ſlender; the others that of *a* broad. In the word *laugh* only *au* has the ſound of *a* open long.

Ea ſounds in *ear*, *beat*, *breach*, as *e* long; in *bread*, *heaven*, as *e* ſhort; in *earth* as *u* ſhort; in *great*, *break*, *bear*, as *a* ſlender long; in *heart*, as *a* open ſhort.

Ee has the ſound of *e* long.

Ei, *ey*, ſounds as *e* long in *receive*, *key*; as *a* ſlender in *eight*, *grey*.

Eo, as *e* long in people: as *e* ſhort in leopard.

Eu, *ew*, *ieu*, and *iew*, have no other than the ſecond long ſound of *u*.

Eau, ſounds as *u* long in beauty; as *o* long in *beau*.

Ie, as *e* long in *piece*, *believe*; as *i* long in *lie*; as *i* ſhort in *ſieve*, as *e* ſhort in *friend*.

Oa, as *o* long, generally: but in *broad*, as *au*.

Oe, as *e* long in *æconomy*; as *o* long in *foe*.

Oi, and *oy* have only one ſound, peculiar to themſelves, and the moſt muſical, the no-

bleſt

bleſt, and the longeſt vowel-ſound in our language.

Oo, has the firſt ſound of *u* long in *food*, *root*; the firſt ſound of *u* ſhort in *foot*, *good*; the ſecond ſound of *u* ſhort in *blood*.

Ou, *ow*, have their proper diphthong-ſound in *our*, *account*, *bough*, *gown*, *renown*; the ſound of *o* long in *court*, *flow*, *row*.

Ou has the ſound of *a* broad in *cough*, the firſt long ſound of *u* in your, and in ſome words adopted from the French, as *tour*, *amour*; and the ſecond ſhort ſound of *u* in rough, and in all terminations of polyſyllables in *our*, and *ous*.

Ui has the firſt long ſound of *u* in *fruit*, *juice*.

When I have occaſion to particularize any of theſe ſounds hereafter, I ſhall call them the 1ſt, 2d, or 3d ſounds of ſuch a vowel, or ſuch a diphthong, according to the order in which they are here mentioned,

Moſt who have hitherto written of Engliſh quantity, ſuppoſe it to be intirely governed by accent, or in other words, that all ſyllables which receive the ſtrong accent are long, and all the reſt ſhort. But Dr. Foſter, and a few others have obſerved that there is ſometimes a long quantity

quantity without a ſtrong accent, and a ſhort quantity with one. What then determines the time of Engliſh ſyllables? That is what neither Dr. Foſter nor any one elſe, except thoſe who aſſert that it is the acute accent only, has attempted to inform the world. Yet it ſeems a ſecret not very difficult to trace out.

It appears from Dr. Foſter's definition that accent has no property by which it can lengthen a ſyllable. It appears on the contrary, from the review of our vowel-ſounds, how greatly they muſt neceſſarily affect the quantity of ſyllables; and if we attentively conſider theſe in all their connections with each other, and with conſonants, no difficulty will remain.

The ſhorteſt poſſible articulate ſound is that of any ſingle vowel. But whatever conſonants precede a vowel in the ſame ſyllable, run into it ſo inſtantaneouſly that the increaſe of length occaſioned by them is ſcarcely perceptible. Any ſyllable therefore which would be ſhort, if no conſonant preceded its vowel, was, by the Greeks, and Latins, alſo eſteemed ſhort tho three conſonants preceded. Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus exemplifies this in the words ὀδός, ῥοδός

δος, τρόπος, and στρόφος, which he ſays gradually increaſe in length, and are yet all ſhort. The ſame holds in Engliſh pronunciation. The ſyllables *ba*, *be*, *bi*, *bo*, *bu*, every vowel receiving its ſhorteſt ſound, are therefore nearly as ſhort as it is poſſible for ſyllables to be. The conſonant alſo which immediately follows a vowel unites with it ſo intimately as ſcarcely to make a perceptible increaſe of length. The ſyllables *bad*, *bed*, *bid*, *bod*, *bud*, are therefore ſhort; and they are exactly of the ſame length with the firſt ſyllables of *famine*, *very*, *finiſh*, *body*, *puniſh*. The ſyllable is very ſenſibly much longer when another conſonant is added, as in *banter*, *ſhelter*, *winter*, *ſhorter*, *ſturdy*; the ſuperior length is equally apparent if inſtead of a ſhort vowel followed by two conſonants, there is a long vowel or a diphthong followed by a ſingle conſonant, as in *bane*, *waining*; *wean*, *impeding*, *vine*, *wily*; *bone*, *bony*; *tune*, *tuning*. But the longeſt ſyllables are thoſe which have a long vowel or a diphthong followed by more than one conſonant, as in *baneful*, *fearful*, *ſpritely*, *loneſome*, *tuneful*, *toilſome*, *appointment*, *ſounding*, *roundly*. What degree of length ſhall intitle a ſyllable to be called long muſt be determined by cuſtom. The ancients admitted the three laſt ſorts for ſuch, and eſteemed the three former ſhort; and tho they acknowledged

ledged a difference of length in long ſyllables as well as in ſhort ſyllables, yet for the general purpoſes of poetical and rhetorical harmony they conſidered all long ſyllables as juſt double in quantity to ſhort ones. We ſhall probably not err if we do the ſame.

This being allowed it becomes an eſtabliſhed rule, that, in Engliſh as in Latin, A SYLLABLE WHICH HAS TWO CONSONANTS FOLLOWING ITS VOWEL IS LONG. A diſtinct effort of the voice is requiſite to pronounce each conſonant, and *two* actions muſt unavoidably take up a longer time than *one* of the ſame kind. This is the reaſon of the well known general rule in Greek and Latin proſody, which being founded in nature and neceſſity, muſt hold in all languages whatſoever.

It is obvious that the caſe of a mute preceding a liquid is without the reaſon, and therefore an exception to the rule. They coaleſce almoſt as one letter, and require but one action of the voice to utter them. We therefore in writing, as in ſpeaking, divide the ſyllables of the words, *rĕgrét*, *rĕplète*, thus, *re-gret*, *re-plete*, but of the words, *cōnténd*, *ōrdáin*, thus, *con-tend*, *or-dain*.

There

There is another exception to the general rule, in which our language differs from the Greek and Latin. EVERY SYLLABLE WITH A SHORT VOWEL, SUCCEEDED BY A DOUBLED CONSONANT, IS SHORT, This will, I doubt not, at firſt, ſtartle many; particularly the learned, who are accuſtomed, as Dr. Foſter candidly obſerves, to judge of theſe matters not by their ſenſe of hearing, but by the rules of the learned languages, that is, by prejudice. Thoſe however, who will make uſe of their ears, which upon this occaſion can alone ſtand them in any ſtead, tho they be not *teretes & religioſæ*, like thoſe of the old Greeks and Romans, but have only that common diſcernment which often falls to the ſhare of Engliſh ones, will clearly perceive that the firſt ſyllables of *manner*, *bitter*, *ſorrow*, are as ſhort as it is poſſible for ſyllables compoſed of a vowel and ſucceeding conſonant, to be. The ſound ſtrikes the ſenſe, and ceaſes inſtantaneouſly. The dulleſt ear will perceive the difference in length between the firſt ſyllables of *bănner*, and *bānter*; of *ſĕller*, and *ſēldom*, of *mŏrrow*, and *mōrning*; nor ſhall we, when aware of the cauſe, wonder at the effect.

We have already obſerved after Mr. S. Johnſon, that the ſhort ſound of our vowels is, generally, not

not the long ſound contracted, but a ſound wholly different. Now in Engliſh pronunciation doubling a conſonant gives no additional conſonant-ſound, but always alters the ſound of the preceding vowel, if long, to the ſhort one; *blām-ing, răm̆mer*; *adhēring, mĕrry*; *rīding, rĭdden*: *hōly, hŏlly*; *fūry, hŭrry**: and that the ſound of a doubled conſonant is not longer than that of a ſingle one will clearly appear if we compare any two words which have, one a ſhort vowel before a double conſonant, the other the ſame ſhort vowel before a ſingle one: *hăm̆mer, făm̆ily*; *lăt-ter, lăteral*; *mĕrry, vĕry*; *ŏddeſt, mŏdeſt*; *cŏm-merce, cŏmet*; *tŏrrid, ŏrange*; *hŏrrible, ŏracle*; *rŭnning, pŭniſh*: in this caſe the ſingle and double conſonants have exactly the ſame ſingle ſound.

* Johnſon has indeed in the laſt edition of his dictionary adverted in one particular inſtance to this very circumſtance: '*K*' he ſays, 'is never doubled, but *c* is uſed before it to 'ſhorten the vowel by a double conſonant, as *cockle*, '*pickle*.

The French, and perhaps other northern languages, have this ſame peculiarity. 'Un regle general dans le Latin,' ſays the abbé Olivet in his ſynonymes Françoises, 'et qui ne 'ſouffre point d'exception, c'eſt que toute ſyllabe qui finit par 'une conſonne ſuivie d'une autre, eſt longue; mais en Fran-'cois au contraire le redoublement de la conſonne preſque 'toujours avertit que la ſyllabe eſt breve.'

found. But the difference in length between our long and ſhort vowels is palpable: *inflāming, calămity; complēting, prophĕtic; adhēring, inhĕrit; bōding, bŏdy; bōny, hŏneſt; ſōlar, ſŏlid; pūny, pŭniſh.* The degree of difference will perhaps appear ſtill more clearly if inſtead of ſyllables with the ſame vowel character, to which in one is given a long, in the other a ſhort ſound, we compare ſyllables which have the ſame vowel ſound, only in one long, in the other ſhort, as in *făthom, fāther; pĕpper, pāper; fĭlling, feēling; ŏffal, āwful; fŭlly, foōliſh.*

If any thing is yet wanting to ſet this matter in the cleareſt light, the following exception to our exceptive rule will do it: WHEN, IN A SENTENCE, THE SAME CONSONANT WHICH ENDS ONE WORD BEGINS THE NEXT, THEY ARE THEN PRONOUNCED DISTINCTLY, BY TWO ACTIONS OF THE VOICE, AND THE PRECEDING SYLLABLE IS CONSEQUENTLY LONG. The word *wholly*, formerly ſpelt with a mute *e* between the *ll*, and ſuch compounds as *overrun*, fall under this exception. In proper and ſolemn pronunciation*, to which theſe obſervations

* Of Engliſh, as of all living tongues there is a double pronunciation; one curſory and colloquial, the other regular and ſolemn. The curſory pronunciation is always vague and

vations more relate than to common diſcourſe, where accuracy of utterance is little regarded, it extends to ſuch compounds as *ĭrrévocable*, *ĭrréſolute*, *ĭrretriévable*, *ŭnnátural*, where an oppoſition is marked to *revocable*, *reſolute*, *retrievable*, *natural*. In ſuch words as *irritate*, which, in our language, marks no oppoſition, the moſt proper pronunciation gives but a ſingle ſound to the *rr*.

It ſcarcely need be mentioned that where *ſc* have the power of *ſſ*, if the preceding vowel be ſhort, the ſyllable formed with it will be ſhort, as in *ăſcénd*, *ăſcertáin*; and where *cc* have, the former the ſound of *k*, and the latter that of *ſ*, the ſyllable formed with the preceding vowel muſt be long, as in *āccent*, *āccépt*.

Sometimes in our language two conſonants meet ſo as to have a ſingle ſound, yet different from what either bears alone, as the final *ng*, the participles of verbs in *ng*, and ſubſtantives in *er* formed from ſuch verbs. But in the comparatives and

and uncertain, being made different in different mouths by negligence, unſkilfulneſs or affectation. The ſolemn pronunciation, tho by no means immutable and permanent, is yet always leſs remote from the orthography, and leſs liable to innovation. Johnſon's Eng. grammar.

and ſuperlatives of adjectives in *ng*, and in moſt other words where thoſe two conſonants meet as medial letters, they have a double ſound, and therefore the ſyllable formed with the preceding vowel will be long, as in *anger*, *danger*, *avenger*, *linger*, *hunger*. Double *g* is always hard: *g* preceded by *d*, always ſoft; and *dg* are in effect double ſoft *g*. The ſyllable therefore formed by them with a preceding ſhort vowel is ſhort, as in *ſedgy*. *Tch* are in effect double *ch*.

It was mentioned in treating of the vowels, that *w* and *y*, have, as proper vowels, no other power than is poſſeſſed by *u*, and *i*. They have however, at the beginning of ſyllables, ſomething very peculiar, and many grammarians have ranked their power in that ſituation among conſonant ſounds. The biſhop of Oxford in his grammar inſiſts on the contrary that they have every property of a vowel, and not one of a conſonant. We muſt certainly, in a great meaſure, admit the learned biſhop's aſſertion. *Ee-oo*, and *oo-ill*, pronounced ſlowly, are each two diſtinct ſyllables; but with a quick utterance they become preciſely *you*, *will*, and are each one ſyllable only. But Mr. S. Johnſon inclines to rank the initial *w* and *y*, among conſonants;

conſonants; becauſe "they follow vowels without any hiatus, or difficulty of utterance, as *froſty* "*winter*, *roſy youth*." Hence we never add *n* to the indefinite article, before words beginning with *y* and *w*, but ſay *a youth*, *a woman*. We may obſerve farther, that notwithſtanding the extreme ſlightneſs of their vowel-ſound theſe letters delay the voice in its progreſs to the ſucceeding vowel as much as any conſonant; and they have ſomething in their ſound incompatible with a ſucceeding conſonant: a vowel muſt follow. It is generally agreed among the learned, that the Latin *v*, and the Æolic digamma were no other than our *w*, and they were always, in verſe at leaſt, eſteemed conſonants. In the ſame manner our *w*, and *y* ſeem to affect quantity merely as conſonants, and therefore to all poetical purpoſes, which is all we have to conſider here, are conſonants.

But *i*, in the middle of words, has frequently the very power of the initial *y*; and *u* is frequently pronounced as if *i*, or *y*, were prefixed. Whether in theſe caſes the time of the *i* ought to be aſſigned to the quantity of the former or the latter ſyllable, I will not take upon me to determine. Perhaps, however, the point may receive

ſome

ſome illuſtration from parallel circumſtances in other languages. Thus, in the Spaniſh, *i* is ſeldom written before another vowel, except where it is acuted; but in words derived from Latin words in which *i* unaccented precedes another vowel, the Spaniards, inſtead of writing the *i*, double the conſonant, as in *Eſpanna*, *ſennor*, and their pronunciation is exactly the ſame as ours where *i* is written inſtead of the ſecond conſonant. The Italians alſo, in words derived from Latin words, where *i* follows a ſingle *n*, omit the *i*, and prefix *g*, as in *Eſpagna*, *ſignore*; yet they pronounce exactly like the Spaniards, or as themſelves pronounce, in other words, where *i* is written after any other conſonant: that is, they ſound *i*, but glide it ſo imperceptibly into the following vowel that it cannot form a diſtinct ſyllable. Our pronunciation is not uniform in this reſpect, but it is regular. The comparatives and ſuperlatives of adjectives in *y*, differ from all other words where the ſame combination of letters occurs: *terrier*, we pronounce as two ſyllables only, as if written *teryer*; but *merrier*, *merrieſt*, we ſpeak as three diſtinct ſyllables *merr-i-er*, *merr-i-eſt*; and thus *ſteddier*, *readier*, *earlier*, *wittier*, *thriftier*. Grammarians indeed aſſign the *i* of *champion*, *previous*, and

even

even that of *precious*, *notion*, and the like to a ſeparate ſyllable from the ſucceeding vowels; but pronunciation makes them only one ſyllable, and modern poets never venture to uſe them as two. Where however the *i* is preceded by a liquid following a mute, it will form a diſtinct ſyllable, as in *opprobrious*, *ſuppliant*.

Our concluding rule is, that in Engliſh as in Latin, WHERE A SYLLABLE ENDING WITH A VOWEL IS FOLLOWED BY A VOWEL, THAT SYLLABLE IS SHORT. The diphthong *oi*, or *oy*, is our only vowel-ſound which has the quantity requiſite for a long ſyllable, without having the voice retarded by a ſucceeding conſonant. Its ſuperior length will appear in comparing it with any other vowel-ſound, as in theſe examples, *really*, *royally*; *conveyance*, *annoyance*; *ruin*, *toying*; *relying*, *injoying*.

SECT. IV.

DR. Foſter has, in his eſſay, employed two chapters upon Engliſh Proſody. From the accuracy and judgment with which he has inveſtigated and explained the nature and differences of accent and quantity, the ſtumbling blocks of all former writers, one ſhould naturally expect valuable information from him upon this ſubject; yet ſo far from it, he has, in all his obſervations upon Engliſh verſification, ſo totally confounded accent and quantity, that it is difficult to conceive how the moſt determined of his adverſaries could do worſe. My obligations to Dr. Foſter's work would alone intitle him to my reſpect, but the very merit and reputation of that work make it the more neceſſary to detect any errors that it may contain. Some of his opinions which I ſuppoſe erroneous, are alſo not uncommon, and it will be material to examine what can be ſaid by ſo learned a critic in ſupport of theſe. As it is, beſides, very difficult to convey by writing preciſe ideas concerning ſound, I ſhall have the advantage of explaning more clearly what I ſuppoſe to be right, by refuting notions which I hold to be wrong.

" Quantity (in the Engliſh language) is not " ſettled by the ſame rules by which the Latin " and Greek is, as that one vowel preceding " another ſhould be pronounced with a ſhort " time, or preceding two conſonants with a long " one. But ſtill, if the voice is retarded in ſome " ſyllables, and quickened in others, by what " cauſe ſoever that delay or rapidity be occaſioned " or directed, there is truly and formally long and " ſhort quantity. When in the words *honeſtly*, " *character*, I dwell longer on the firſt ſyllable " than on either of the two laſt, which I hurry " over ſwiftly, the two laſt are the ſhort ones, not- " withſtanding the conſonants with which to the " eye they appear to be clogged. And had there " been ſix conſonants inſtead of three in thoſe " two laſt ſyllables, if my voice ſhould in practice " haſten over each of them in leſs time than it " does over the firſt, which is diſencumbered " with conſonants, the latter ſyllables would " certainly have a ſhort quantity, and the firſt a " long one. And thus it muſt appear to every " one, who will not ſuffer his eyes to judge for " his ears." Page, 30.

" When we ſee ſo very frequently Greek " vowels made ſhort before two conſonants,

" and

" and on the other hand made long before other
" vowels, as in ἄλγῐον, δάκρῡε, and numberleſs
" other words, why ſhould we be ſurpriſed at
" finding the ſame in our own language, as
" in *rēally crūĕlty* &c. ? There is indeed no
" good reaſon in the nature of our ſound,
" why the voice ſhould not dwell long on a
" ſingle vowel, and in a ſhort time hurry over
" more than one conſonant. But arguments
" of general reaſon, in a caſe relating to ſpeech,
" I do not ſo much regard as fact, and fact I
" am ſure, allows of what is ſaid above. (A
" German can precipitate his voice over four or
" five conſonants without lengthening the ſound
" of the preceding vowel, where a Greek or
" Roman voice would be retarded by only two.
" p. 53.) The firſt ſyllable of *ſtrengthen*, where
" the vowel appears to the ſight to be clogged
" with ſix conſonants and an aſpirate, hath as
" quick and eaſy pronunciation as the firſt
" ſyllable of *oo-zy* where two vowels ſtand alone."

" This brings me again to the conſideration of
" Engliſh quantity, in regard to which, it will
" be ſaid, that thoſe ſyllables, which I call long,
" receive a peculiar ſtreſs of voice from their
" acute accent, as in *réally*, *crúelty*. I allow it,

" and

" and by that means they are elevated ; but they " are lengthened too. The caſe is, we Eng- " liſh cannot readily elevate a ſyllable without " lengthening it, by which our acute accent and " long quantity generally coincide, and fall " together on the ſame ſyllable. If we utter the " word *majeſty*, we utter the firſt ſyllable with an " acute higher tone and long, the two laſt with " a grave lower ſound and ſhort, *mājĕſty*. Here " becauſe the ſame ſyllable is pronounced with " a higher note, i. e. acuted, and with a pro- " tracted one, i. e. lengthened at the ſame time ; " we are apt not to diſtinguiſh between theſe " two different modes of the ſame ſyllable, " between its accent and quantity. But let one " brought up in Scotland, pronounce this word, " and we may ſoon mark the difference between " them ; by his pronouncing the firſt ſyllable " long with a grave, and the laſt ſhort with an " acute : as, *mā`jeſty'*."

" But the coincidence of the acute and long " quantity in the ſame ſyllable is certainly moſt " uſual with us in the pronunciation of our own " language tho not univerſal. The accent is on " a ſhort ſyllable in *prívy*, tho on a long one in " *private* On the other hand tho the acuted

" ſyllable

" ſyllable is generally long, yet every long one
" is not acuted. p. 47--49.

" Our ſhort ſyllable differs from another
" ſhort, and one long from another long.
" Certain I am that in Engliſh the quantity of
" the firſt ſyllable of *fōlly* tho long, is yet not
" ſo long as the firſt in *dōwry*." p. 33.

This is the whole information which we find concerning the quantity of ſyllables in the Engliſh language, in a book of great authority, and the only one which has treated the ſubject ſo fully. And ſuppoſing Dr. Foſter's reader to give him credit for all that he advances, to what does it amount? To juſt this; that the acute accent generally determines the time of our ſyllables, but not univerſally; yet he is much at a loſs to ſay, *where* it does and where it does not, and totally to ſeek *why*.

But though we receive no poſitive information from him, we might at leaſt expect that of a negative kind to be good. We ſhall, however, upon examination, find him no leſs unhappy in the choice of opinions to explode as errors, than unſucceſsful in ſearching after truths.

I am

I am ſorry to accuſe Dr. Foſter of any unfairneſs in argument, yet, I muſt ſay, there appears ſome in his manner of wording the Greek and Latin rule, "that a vowel preceding two "conſonants ſhould be pronounced with a long "time." He can hardly be ignorant, that two conſonants affect not in the leaſt the time of the preceding vowel. Ten conſonants would not oblige even a Greek or Roman voice to give to a preceding epſilon or omicron the power of an eta or an omega †, but two conſonants, diſtinctly pronounced, will neceſſarily retard any voice in pronouncing the *ſyllable*, ſo as to occaſion a long time. The reaſon of this, as I have already obſerved, is, that a diſtinct effort of the voice is neceſſary to the pronunciation of each conſonant, and two actions unavoidably require more time than one of the ſame kind. What the precipitation of a German voice may be, I know not, being wholly unacquainted with the language, but I am very ſure that it can no way affect the preſent queſtion.

But,

† There is indeed, in Quintilian, a paſſage upon the firſt ſyllable of *agreſtem*, which might poſſibly induce ſuch a ſhadow-catcher as I. Voſſius, with all his learning and ingenuity, ſeems to have been, to adopt ſuch a notion, but one ſhould think would hardly deceive ſo wary a critic as Dr. Foſter.

But, ſays Dr. Foſter, " We very frequently " ſee Greek *vowels* made ſhort before two con- " ſonants," (here again he means *ſyllables*, which have their vowel followed by two conſonants; the vowels being equally ſhort whether followed by one, two, or ten conſonants) " and, on the " other hand, made long before other vowels." Syllables are not made long or ſhort by written, but by ſpoken letters, and it ſeems a little extraordinary to go to prove to Engliſhmen what their pronunciation of their own language is, by the practice of the Greeks, who uſed a language now no longer ſpoken, and of the proper pronunciation of which we know ſcarcely anything but the comparative length of the ſyllables. What indeed but extremeſt error can be the conſequence of determining concerning the analogy between orthography and pronunciation in one language by the principles of that analogy in another totally different. We can hardly ſuppoſe, that the Greeks, ſo remarkable for euphony, ſounded the γν in γνάμπτω, γνώριμος, and other words, in that diſagreeable manner in which only we have any idea of pronouncing them. We accordingly commonly leave the γ unpronounced, but we have no ſufficient reaſon to ſuppoſe that it was equally unnoticed in their pronunciation.

The

The ſame may be obſerved of κν, κτ, π] and ſome others. We know that the common European *b* is a foreign ſound to the modern Greeks, never uſed by them in words derived from the old Greek (except in one particular circumſtance when π has that ſound) and that to expreſs it in words derived from other languages they uſe the letters μπ. Would any Engliſhman, to whom this was unknown, ever think of pronouncing thoſe two letters like his own *b*. And how do we know, but by ſome analogy equally ſtrange to us, and peculiar to their language, the ancient Greeks pronounced γν, κν, κτ, π], δν, at the beginning of words, the π] in Αιγυπ]ίους the κτρ in Ηλεκτρυων-νης, the μν in τεμνω in a different manner from any that we can gueſs? How, in ſhort, do we know, but they pronounced all combinations of conſonants which have not the property of lengthening the preceding ſyllable, as one letter? It is alſo poſſible, that they might totally drop ſome of thoſe conſonants in pronunciation: both caſes are common in our own language; and it is ſurely more reaſonable to argue concerning the pronunciation of a dead language upon the principles of a well known living one, than concerning the pronunciation of ſuch a living language upon

upon the principles of one that no longer exiſts but upon paper, and moſt particulars concerning the pronunciation of which muſt conſequently ever remain in abſolute obſcurity.

But Dr. Foſter ſeems to think his compariſon of the words *ſtrengthen*, and *oozy* an irrefragable argument againſt the neceſſity of delay in the utterance of conſonants. He is however hardly quite candid upon this occaſion. He knows that the conſonants *ſtr*, or any others, preceding a vowel, affected not in the leaſt the quantity of the ſyllable formed with that vowel to any purpoſe of poetical or rhetorical harmony, not even with the Greeks and Romans; whoſe ears, he tells us, and probably with truth, were much more nice and diſcerning than ours. The *ng* have, as he alſo knows, but a ſingle ſound, reſembling the French *n*, only not quite ſo naſal; and *th* form properly but one letter. Here then are his ſix conſonants and an aſpirate reduced to two, and theſe being preceded by one of the ſhorteſt vowel-ſounds in our language, how can the ſyllable be otherwiſe than one of the ſhorteſt of thoſe whoſe quantity can be called long?

Conſonant-

Conſonant-ſounds are of a ſtubborn nature, and admit neither lengthening nor contracting. Vowels, on the contrary, admit both almoſt to infinity. The unmuſicalneſs of the northern languages is not owing to the ſhortneſs of their ſyllables, but to the ſhortneſs of their vowel-ſounds; and the ſuperior euphony of the Greeks was in a great meaſure derived from the oppoſite circumſtance *. We have reaſon to think, that they pronounced their long vowels, not only longer than we do, but longer alſo than the Romans, and this, in ſome meaſure, on the authority of Horace,

> Graiis ingenium, Graiis dedit *ore rotundo*
> Muſa loqui.

I have already obſerved that we have in our language but one vowel-ſound with the length requiſite for a long quantity without being ſupported by a ſucceeding conſonant, and it ſeems needleſs to add anything here in anſwer to Dr. Foſter's

* Τούτων δὴ (τῶν φωνήεντων) κράτιστα μὲν ἔστι, καὶ φωνὴν ἡδίστην ἀποτελεῖ τά τε μακρὰ, καὶ τῶν διχρόνων ὅσα μηκύνεται κατὰ τὴν ἐκφοράν, ὅτι πολὺν ἠχεῖται χρόνον καὶ τῷ πνεύματος ὑπὸ καλακόπτει τὸν τόνον: χείρω δὲ τὰ βραχέα ἢ βραχέως λεγόμενα, ὅτι μικρόφωνά τε ἐστι καὶ σπαδονίζει τὸν ἦχον. Dion. Hal. περὶ συνθ. 14.

ter's remark upon the length of vowels. To be convinced that he is wrong it will be fully ſufficient to hear the words *real* and *royal* properly pronounced.

With regard to the word *majeſty*, an Engliſhman gives to the *a* what Mr. Johnſon calls its open ſound, which is its common ſhort ſound, nor will any Engliſh ear bear to have that ſound lengthened in that word as it is in the word *father*. The firſt ſyllable of *majeſty* is therefore, in Engliſh pronunciation, ſhort. A Scotsman, on the contrary, gives to the *a* its Engliſh broad ſound, or ſomething nearly reſembling it; and thus makes the firſt ſyllable long.

The juſtneſs of Dr. F's obſervation upon *privy* and *private*, makes it appear extraordinary that analogy did not lead him to truth throughout: that nothing ſhould have induced him to inquire why the firſt ſyllable of *private*, is long, and of *privy*, ſhort; and if he did give a thought that way, that he could miſs of ſo eaſy a ſolution as this: the firſt ſyllable of *private* is long, becauſe it has a long vowel followed by a conſonant; the firſt of *privy* is ſhort, becauſe its vowel is ſhort, and ſucceeded but by one conſonant. Had he

gone

gone thus far he would have found that his obſervation would have ſtood as well thus: "the "accent is on a ſhort ſyllable in *májeſty* and *má-* "*gic*, tho on a long one in *fátherly*, and *májor*."

To this obſervation, that "we Engliſh cannot "readily elevate a ſyllable without lengthening "it," he adds in a note, "This is confirmed by "the deciſive authority of Mr. Samuel Johnſon, "whoſe very great abilities, and extenſive erudi- "tion have done an honour to his age and coun- "try. He, in the rules of his proſody, prefixed "to his dictionary, conſiders the acute tone and "long quantity in Engliſh verſe, as equivalent "by acting together." The concurring authorities of Dr. Foſter and Mr Johnſon are without doubt very formidable, yet, when oppoſed to truth, no more to be regarded than the *academiæ auctoritas*, of which Dr. Foſter makes ſo light, and which he has indeed pretty well proved to be fallible. It however appears from the extreme brevity with which Mr Johnſon has treated this ſubject, that he never beſtowed much attention upon it, and his labors have been ſo extraordinary, that thoſe muſt be peculiarly uncandid, who are not much more inclined to wonder at the great things which he has done well, than to cavil at the

little

little ones which he has neglected. But he is in reality far from being ſo favorable to Dr. Foſter's cauſe as the doctor ſeems to apprehend. His account of the long and ſhort ſounds of our vowels, correſponds exactly, as far as it goes, with that given in the foregoing ſection, and all his examples of ſhort, as well as of long ſyllables, are accented. * One ſhould in truth think it impoſſible that the man who wrote the remarks upon accent and quantity inſerted in the ſecond ſection of theſe obſervations, or indeed that any Engliſhman who has red thoſe remarks, could fancy any inability in himſelf to unite an acute accent with a ſhort quantity. If old prejudices, countenanced by high authority, ſhould incline any one yet to doubt, Dr. Foſter's own account of the particular nature of the acute tone, ſeems ſufficient to convince the moſt ſceptical.

" In regard to the acute, even when it is join-
" ed with a long ſyllable, as in *contémnit*, tho'
" the duration of the ſound be long, the power
" and effect of the acute is ſhort, and quick to
" the ſenſe. When a high note ſucceeds a low
" one, or riſes above the grave tone of voice, the
" perception

* See both the grammar and the dictionary, particularly on the letters E, I, and K.

" perception of it is ſudden and inſtantaneous,
" before the continuance of the note is deter-
" mined one way or the other for long or ſhort.
" The account which I have here attempted to
" give of the true nature and power of the acute
" tone is confirmed by what Ariſtotle, de anima,
" in his chapter περὶ ψόφε καὶ ἀκοῆς, ſays, τὸ μὲν
" Ὀξὺ κινεῖ τὴν αἴσθησιν ἐν ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ ἐπιπο-
" λὺ τὸ δὲ βαρὺ ἐν πολλῷ ἐπ ὀλίγον. *Acutus*
" *ſonus movet ſenſum in brevi tempore plurimum:*
" *Gravis vero in multo paulum.* Again in another
" place: ὅτ ἐν φωνῇ Ὀξέος ὄντος κατὰ τὸ ὀλίγον
" -----τὸ δὲ Ὀξὺ δί ὀλιγότητα ταχύ. *Cum a-*
" *cutus in voce exiſtat breviter—acutus proter* bre-
" vitatem vel *levitatem, velox.* It may perhaps
" receive a farther illuſtration from a paſſage of
" Plutarch in his *Quæſtiones Platonicæ*, where he
" is treating of ſounds in general. That author
" having mentioned the harmony of ſounds, ſays,
" Ὀξὺς μὲν γὰρ ὁ ταχὺς γίνεται, βαρὺς δὲ ὁ βρα-
" δύς· διὸ καὶ πρότερον κινοῦσι τὴν αἴσθησιν οἱ ὀξεῖς·
" ὅταν δὲ τούτοις ἤδη μαραινομένοις καὶ ἀπολήγο-
" μένοις οἱ βραδεῖς ἐπιβάλλωσιν ἀρχόμενοι, τὸ
" κραθὲν αὐτῶν δι' ὁμοπαθείαν, ἡδονὴν τῇ ἀκοῇ
" πάρεσχεν, ἣν συμφωνίαν καλοῦσιν. *Acutus e-*
" *nim celer fit, gravis vero tardus: quare et prius*
" *movent*

" *movent ſenſum acuti ſoni. Cum vero his evanet*
" *centibus ſuccedant graves incipientes, mixtum quid-*
" *dam ex his per naturæ convenientiam voluptatem*
" *auditui præbet, quam ſymphoniam vocant.* The
" explanation which Macrobius gives of the acute
" ſound is like the preceding. *Diximus nunquam*
" *ſonum fieri, niſi aere percuſſo. Ut autem ſonus*
" *ipſe aut* ACUTIOR *aut* GRAVIOR *proferatur, ictus*
" *efficit: qui dum ingens et celer incidit acutum*
" *ſonum præſtat; ſi* TARDIOR LENIORVE GRA-
" VIOREM. *Indicio eſt virga; quæ dum auras*
" *percutit, ſi impulſu* CITO *feriat, ſonum* ACUIT:
" *ſi* LENTIOR, GRAVIUS *ferit auditum. In fidibus*
" *quoque idem videmus: quæ ſi tractu arctiore ten-*
" *duntur, acute ſonant; ſi laxiore, gravius.*" Page
273, 280.

" Notwithſtanding the reluctance of Voſſius,
" Henninius, and thouſands after them, to ad-
" mit the acute as compatible with a ſhort time;
" if I could have them near me with a flute in
" my hand, or rather with an organ before us, I
" would engage to convince them of the con-
" ſiſtency of theſe two. I would take any two
" keys next to each other, one of which would
" conſequently give a ſound lower than the
" other: ſuppoſe the words ἀειδε before us,

" or

" or ἀροῦραν; both which words Voſſius would
" circumflex on the penultimate, inſtead of giv-
" ing an acute to the firſt according to our
" preſent marks: I would conformably to theſe
" marks juſt touch the higher key for the initial
" ἀ, and take my finger off immediately; and
" then touch the lower key on which I would
" dwell longer than I did on the higher, and
" that would give me a grave with a long time
" for the ſyllable ει; the ſame lower key I would
" juſt touch again, and inſtantly leave it, which
" would give me a grave with a ſhort time for
" δε: ἄειδε. Now if this can be done on a
" wind-inſtrument within the narrow compas of
" two notes, it may be done by the organs of
" human ſpeech, which are of the nature of a
" wind-inſtrument, in ordinary pronunciation.
" For the ſounds of our voice in common ſpeech
" differ from thoſe of ſuch muſical inſtruments,
" not in *quality*, but in arithmetical diſcrete
" quantity or number only, as hath been obſerv-
" ed before, and is confirmed by the deciſive
" judgment of that nice and diſcerning critic
" Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus. Here then is,
" to demonſtration, an acute tone conſiſtent with
" a ſhort time, and a grave tone with a long
" one." P. 342. 343. Strange it ſeems, that

 the

the author of this paſſage ſhould maintain an opinion ſo contrary to truth, ſo repugnant to his own purpoſe, ſo belied by daily and hourly experience, as that the union of the acute tone with a ſhort quantity ſeldom occurs in Engliſh pronunciation, and is hardly practicable by an Engliſh voice.

Every language has its peculiar method of accentuation: the ſame words were differently accented in the different Greek dialects, and with us the ſame words are differently accented by the Engliſh and Scots. The accentuation is in ſhort the great difficulty in learning any foreign pronunciation. We know that in the Latin language, there was no word which reſembled both in times and tones the words ἄειδε, and ἄρμαι, for if the penultimate was long, it was always acuted or circumflexed. In Engliſh it is very common for a ſhort antepenultimate to be acuted when the penultimate is long by means of conſonants, as in *hŏnēſty*, but very uncommon where the penultimate has a long vowel or diphthong. Our language is however not without inſtances of it in compound words, as *gúnpōwder*, *ſúnrīſing*, *wáyfāring*, *ſéafāring*, *fréſhwāter*, *nightfoūnder'd*: But it may be obſerved, that contrary to the general

neral pronunciation of triſſyllables accented on the firſt, theſe words have the ſecond ſyllable more ſtrongly marked by the voice than the third. We have alſo compound diſſyllables accented on the firſt, with a long vowel in the ſecond; but here too the ſecond is more marked by the voice than in common diſſyllables: *thirteen*, *fourteen*, *threefold*, *fourfold*, *dovelike*, *ſtarlight*, *ſhipwright*, *longboat*. In ſome compound words alſo the accent is occaſionally tranferred from the ſecond to the firſt on account of emphaſis; and then if the vowel of the ſecond were long, it ſtill retains its length. Thus the word *unaltered* has naturally the acute on the ſecond ſyllable, but if the queſtion be aſked, "Is "it altered?" it may be anſwered, "No: it re- "mains ūnāltered," the ſtrong accent accompanying the emphaſis on the firſt ſyllable. But here the ſecond retains a weak circumflex, and the voice falls not quite till it comes to the third. The progreſſion therefore from a ſhort ſyllable acuted to a long vowel unaccented, being without the bounds of Engliſh pronunciation, hath ſome difficulty to an Engliſh voice; none, perhaps, to execute it, but certainly ſome to do it gracefully. We need however neither wonder at this, nor be aſhamed of it, ſince a moment's re-

collection

collection may remind us that many foreigners, after living among us twenty or thirty years, retain ſtill an awkwardneſs in pronouncing many Engliſh words; and that ſcarcely any ever acquire our pronunciation ſo perfectly, but that they may be diſtinguiſhed by what is properly enough called in the vulgar phraſe, a foreign accent,

SECT.

SECT. V.

FOR examples of the comparative length of ſyllables I have hitherto generally choſen acuted ſyllables; and for this reaſon: the different ſound and the different length of the vowels is in theſe more ſtrongly perceptible becauſe more ſtrongly offered to the ear, which is ſhocked at the leaſt inaccuracy in pronouncing them; but is ſo little ſcrupulous concerning unaccented ſyllables, that great inaccuracies in the pronunciation of them paſs unregarded. Hence it happens that in common diſcourſe few ſuch ſyllables have long vowels. In the more ſolemn delivery which a ſtudied oration or a ſerious poem require, ſuch ſyllables have frequently long vowels; but then it is very much at the diſcretion of the ſpeaker; for we have no ſtandard, no ſettled cuſtom to determine which of thoſe ſyllables ſhould have their vowels lengthened.

How ſcrupulous the ear is concerning accented ſyllables, and how much leſs it regards the unaccented will appear ſtrongly in theſe inſtances among many others that might be produced:

duced: in the word *almoſt*, properly pronounced, the *a* has its broad ſound, and the firſt ſyllable has conſequently more than the length indiſpenſibly requiſite to conſtitute a long quantity. With that pronunciation it has this peculiarity, that the accent is given indifferently to either ſyllable as may contribute moſt to the harmony of the period, tho more commonly to the firſt. But in the quick utterance of common converſation, not only the *a* is contracted to its very ſhorteſt ſound, but the *l* is totally dropt. In this ſtate the ear will by no means ſuffer the accent on the firſt ſyllable, but ſtrictly requires it on the laſt. Again, in colloquial pronunciation a ſhort quantity is commonly given to the firſt ſyllable of *orátion*; in ſolemn ſpeaking, a long one: it may however have either on any occaſion without any offenſive impropriety. But in the word *óratory*, where the firſt ſyllable is accented, however deliberate the manner of ſpeaking, and however ſolemn the occaſion, the ear will by no means allow it more than its proper ſhort time: it will neither ſuffer the ſhort ſound of the *o* to be lengthened, as in the firſt ſyllable of *óffer* and *aúditor*, nor the common long one to be uſed, as in *ôral*. So far

far is accent from occaſioning a long time in every ſyllable to which it is given by an Engliſh voice.

From the indifference of the ear to unaccented ſyllables it happens that in homogeneal words a change in the diſpoſition of the accent frequently occaſions an alteration in the quantities, *appā′rent, appărī′tion; negā′tion, nĕ′gătive; revē′ring, rĕ′vĕrence; orā′tion ŏ′rător; hŏrī′zon, hŏrĭzŏ′ntal:* and here not only the quantities, but the very ſounds of the vowels are changed.

Unaccented vowels are, as we have obſerved, ſhort, unleſs the ſpeaker chuſes to lengthen them, which is ſeldom done but in ſolemn delivery. The vowel *i*, when it has its firſt, or proper long ſound, as in *ſolemnīzátion*, muſt however be excepted. What is remarked of the firſt ſound of *i* in the third ſection will account for this peculiarity. The other vowels, wherever the eſtabliſhed cuſtom of pronunciation gives them their proper long ſound, may have that ſound either long or ſhort at the diſcretion of the ſpeaker. Otherwiſe unaccented vowels are neceſſarily ſhort.

Accented

Accented ſyllables are perfectly fit for examples of comparative quantity, as will appear from this conſideration: they have in our pronunciation four progreſſive, and fixt degrees of quantity with the ſame vowel ſound; 1. *bēing*, 2. *bĭdding*, 3. *hĭnder*, *ſeēming*, 4. *ſeēmly*. It is difficult, to conceive a ſyllable, with or without accent, ſhorter than the firſt of *bēing* is in colloquial pronunciation: but we have ſyllables longer than the longeſt of theſe, as in *ſoúndboard*, *roúndly*, *appoíntment*. How abſurd then to give to all theſe ſyllables, ſo widely differing in quantity, equally the title of *long*, and how much more abſurd to ſuppoſe that the mere abſence of the acute accent can reduce the longeſt of them to a leſs quantity than that of the ſhorteſt retaining it.

When every particular which in Engliſh pronunciation affects quantity, has been well conſidered, it will not be difficult to make a juſt compariſon of the quantities of unaccented with thoſe of other unaccented, or with thoſe of accented ſyllables; and there is one compariſon which, if our ſyſtem yet wants corroboration, will, with thoſe who have their ſenſe of hearing moderately accurate, contribute much to that end. With regard

regard to the degree of accuracy requiſite, I am far from preſuming to preſcribe it, but willingly embrace the determination of Plutarch, who has given his opinion very expreſsly upon that point, as the reader may have obſerved in the 2d ſection of this eſſay. Let then accented and unaccented ſyllables be ſelected which have both vowel and conſonant ſounds exactly alike, and whoſe difference lies in the accent only; as in *ímpotent*, *impólitic*; *ſígnify*, *ſignificant*; *áccent*, *accéntual*; *áuthor*, *authéntic*; *ídolize*, *idólatrous*; *ſúſtenance*, *ſuſtáining*; *órder*, *ordáin*: it will be found abſolutely impoſſible for the voice to arrive at the ſecond ſyllable of the words whoſe firſt is unaccented, in leſs time than it requires to get to the ſecond of thoſe other words which have the ſtrong accent on the firſt. Either then accent has no power of lengthening a ſyllable, or, if ſuch a power exiſts, it is of the ſame kind with the vibrations of a bell, the accented ſyllable continuing to tinkle while the voice proceeds in the utterance of other ſyllables. Strangely abſurd as this notion muſt appear to thoſe who determine by their ſenſe of hearing alone ſuch matters as fall under the cognizance of that ſenſe only, and directly contradictory as it is to all the obſervations that remain to us from the ancients upon the ſubject,

yet has it been conceived and cheriſhed by a man of high reputation both for ingenuity and learning, and lately adopted by an elegant critic of our own age and nation: *Syllaba acuta longius intervallum penetrat, & plures ſui ſimiles ſyllabas propagat in aëre; ideoque et diutius vivit ejus imago audibilis, & a diſtantibus melius percipitur, & majori intervallo repetitur ab echo, quam ſyllaba gravis, aut ſyllabico accentu remiſſe prolata: non ſecus ac ſit in chorda intenſius ducta quam in ea quæ remiſſius: & hinc nimirum eſt, ut ſyllaba acuta videatur ſemper longior quam gravis, ſpectata ſcilicet mora; non quia dum eſt in ore proferentis ipſi inſiſtitur, ſed quia ejus ſpecies in aere vivit.* Kirch. Muſur. l. viii. c. 7. Webb on poetry and muſic, p. 87. As well might one reaſon againſt one who ſhould affirm ſnow to be black, and jet white, as againſt ſuch a doctrine. The reader will have obſerved how directly repugnant it is to the opinions of Ariſtotle, Plutarch and Macrobius mentioned in the 4th ſection. For my own part I reſt perfectly ſatisfied with the conviction that my hearing affords me, corroborated by the opinions of all the ancients, and moſt of the moderns who have written on the ſubject, who ſeem perfectly agreed that the human voice not only acts by powers much reſembling thoſe of muſical wind-inſtruments

ments in general, but that in fact it is a muſical wind inſtrument, and from its nature abſolutely incapable of uttering two ſounds at once. But it is ſaid that from the percuſſion of the air the ſound continues to be heard beyond the time of utterance. If this whimſical notion could poſſibly be verified, what horrid diſcords would not a hoboy make in the hands of the moſt ſkillful player? Nay, Farinelli himſelf could ſing nothing but echo-pieces. We may ſafely conclude then that mere accent has no power by which it can protract ſound.

Emphaſis ſeems to have contributed not a little to the confuſion between accent and quantity. Theſe two, height and length, are ſo perfectly diſtinct in their nature, that no two qualities ſubſiſting in one ſubject can be more ſo. But emphaſis, which Scaliger calls *afflatio in latitudine*, and Priſcian ſimply *breadth*, is not ſo palpably diſtinguiſhable from the other two. The terms height and length expreſs with the utmoſt ſimplicity, and the utmoſt preciſion the properties of accent and quantity; but it requires ſome refinement to conceive the relation between emphaſis and breadth; and in this they differ, that emphaſis partakes more of the nature of height than

than of length. Accent is inſeparable from it. With quantity alſo it has its connection, and may on ſome occaſions, with ſufficient propriety be ſaid to create a long time, giving it to ſyllables naturally ſhort; a power which mere accent never has:

Not to know ME argues thyſelf unknown.
But WE are ſpirits of another mold.
DIE of a roſe in aromatic pain.
O fountain Arethuſe, and THOU honor'd flood
Smooth-ſliding Mincius.——

the words *me*, *we*, *die*, *thou*, ſimply accented, as their ſituation in the ſentence requires, tho their vowels be long, are yet for want of ſupporting conſonants, ſhort ſyllables; but when inflated with that emphaſis which the ſenſe here demands, they ſwell, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, in height, in length, and in breadth, beyond their natural ſize. This power of the emphaſis is cheifly perceptible in monoſyllables, for being divided in longer words, it loſes greatly of its effect. In monoſyllables with a ſhort vowel followed by a conſonant, emphaſis never produces the vowel, but if that conſonant be a ſemivowel, ſeems ſometimes to lengthen the conſonant-ſound, as will be more particularly obſerved hereafter.

The

The conſideration of the powers of emphaſis, and of the mutability of our vowel-ſounds, will make it clear why monoſyllables ending with a vowel have moſtly that vowel long when acuted, and ſhort when otherwiſe; and will ſolve all other ſeeming difficulties in Engliſh quantity, without recurring in any caſe to that unaccountable neceſſity which Dr Foſter and others have ſuppoſed an Engliſh voice to be under, of lengthening every ſyllable which it acutes. We pronounce the acuted ſyllable in *feſtivity*, ſhort. A Scotſman lengthens it, not by uſing the Engliſh long ſound of *i*, but by producing the Engliſh ſhort ſound of *i*, pronouncing the word as if written *feſteevity*. His accentuation, it may be ſaid, is different; but an Engliſh voice will without any difficulty pronounce the word with the Scottiſh alteration of time, and retain its own tone. If, ſpeaking the words *give me the book*, we acute the firſt, leaving the ſecond and third unaccented, the vowels of the ſecond and third will have exactly the ſound of the vowels in the ſecond and third ſyllables of *enmity*; that is the long ſound of *e* ſhortened, which is the common ſhort ſound of *i*. If we acute the ſyllable *me*, we lengthen it; but clearly not from any neceſſity that the voice is under, becauſe any Engliſh voice can

give

give it, tho acuted, either a long, or a ſhort time juſt as eaſily as he can pronounce at pleaſure *feſtevity*, or *feſtēvity*. Why then do we lengthen thoſe monoſyllables when we acute them and then only? If I ſhould ſay that cuſtom will have it ſo, *quem penes arbitrium eſt, et jus, et norma loquendi*, it were perhaps an anſwer that could not be objected to; but it may be added, that a ſtrong accent is never given to them, but as a neceſſary concomitant of emphaſis; and length of time concurs with ſtrength of tone to mark the emphaſis more ſtrongly. We pronounce *me*, and *my*, unaccented, exactly alike; but if in ſaying *give me my book*, our meaning requires an emphaſis on the word *my*, the emphaſis, by its power of extending will make the ſyllable long, and its concomitant accent will demand that the *y* have its proper long ſound; or rather, the ear will demand it on account of the ſtrong accent.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

IF we are right in our obſervations through the foregoing ſections, we are now poſſeſſed of every requiſite for analyſing any piece of Engliſh poetry whatſoever. Such an analyſis will ſerve as a teſt of the truth of all the foregoing obſervations, and by ſuch an analyſis only can we diſcover the rationale of harmony in Engliſh ſpeech, and aſcertain the rules of Engliſh verſification. For the purpoſe of this analyſis blank verſe is much preferable to rimed, not only becauſe it admits greater variety of harmony, but alſo becauſe it ſubſiſts by the ſtrength of harmony alone: and of our poems in blank verſe none can be more proper than thoſe of Milton; becauſe, as Dr. Foſter very juſtly obſerves, "There is no kind or degree of harmony "of which our language is capable, which may "not be found in numberleſs inſtances through "Milton's writings; the excellency of whoſe ear "ſeems to have been equal to that of his ima-"gination and learning."

That ſedate majeſty of numbers ſo highly becoming the opening of an epic poem, is ſtrikingly obſervable in the firſt lines of Paradiſe Loſt, in which

which the ſubject is propoſed, notwithſtanding that they have, as Mr. Addiſon has remarked, the utmoſt ſimplicity of thought and expreſſion; and as the biſhop of Briſtol farther remarks, there is a beautiful variety in the numbers, which of themſelves charm every reader: theſe lines are therefore every way fit for our purpoſe.

Of mā'n's | fī'rſt diſ|ŏbē'd|iēnce,--ā'nd | thĕ frū'it
Of thā't | fōrbĭ'd|dēn trē'e|--whōſe mō'r|tāl tā'ſte
Broū'ght dea'th | ī'ntŏ | thĕ wo'rld|--and ā'll | our wō'e,
Wīth lō'ſs | ŏf Ē'|dēn--tī'll | ō'ne grē'a|tēr mân
Rēſtō're | ŭs,--ā'nd | rĕgā'in | thĕ blī'ſs|fūl sē'at,
Sī'ng heáven|lў Mū'ſe,|--thăt ō'n | thĕ sē'|crēt tóp
Of Ō'|rĕb, ŏ'r | ōf Sī'|nāi,--dī'dſt | īnſpī're
Thā't Shĕ'phērd,--whō|fī'rſt tā'ught|thĕ chō'ſen sē'ed
In thĕ | bĕgĭ'n|nīng--hō'w | thé heávens | and eā'rth
Rō'ſe oū't | ōf Chă'|ōs:--ò'r | īf Sĭ'|ŏn híll
Dĕlī'ght | thēe mō're,|--ānd Sĭ'lŏ|ā's brō'ok |thāt flō'w'd
Fā'ſt bў | thĕ ŏ'|răclè | ōf Gód;|--ī thē'nce
Īnvō'ke | thy aī'd|--tŏ mў | ādvē'n|trōus ſóng
Thā't wīth | nō' mĭ'd|dlē flī'ght|--īntē'nds | tŏ ſōar
Abō've | th' Ă'ō|niān moū'nt,|--whī'le īt | pūrſū'es
Thī'ngs ŭ'n|ăttē'mp|tēd yĕ't|----īn prō'ſe | ōr rhў'me.
Aīnd chī'ef|lў thōu, | ō' ſpĭ'rīt,|--thāt dō'ſt | prefér
Bĕfō're | ā'll tē'm|plēs--th' ū'p|rīght hē'art, | ānd pū're,

Īnſtrū'ct

Inſtrū'ct|mĕ, fō'r|thō'u knō'w'ſt;|--thō'u frōm|thĕ fī'rſt
Wāſt prĕ'|ſēnt,--ā'nd,|wīth mī'gh|tў wī'ngs|oūtſpreād,
Dō'velīke|ſā'tſt brō'odĭng--ō'n|thĕ vā'ſt|ăby'ſs
And mā'd'ſt|īt prē'g|nānt:--whă't|īn mé|īs dā'rk
Illū'|mīn;--whăt|īs lō'w,|rā'iſe ānd|ſŭppō'rt,
Thā't, tŏ|thē hē'ight|--ōf thī's|grē'at ā'r|gŭmēnt;
I' măy|ăſſē'rt|--ētē'r|nāl prŏ'|vĭdē'nce,
And jū's|tĭfў'|--thĕ wā'ys|ōf Gō'd|tŏ mén.

A few remarks which this analyſis ſuggeſts may be neceſſary before we proceed in our inquiry.

The biſhop of Briſtol, in his excellent edition of Milton's works, obſerves, that "beſide the "other methods which Milton has employed "to diverſiſy and improve his numbers, he takes "the ſame liberties as Shakeſpear and others of "our old poets, and in imitation of the Greeks "and Latins often cuts off the vowel at the "end of a word when the next word begins "with a vowel; tho he does not like the Greeks, "wholly drop the vowel, but retains it in writing, "like the Latins. Another liberty that he takes "likewiſe for the greater improvement and va-"riety of his verſification is pronuncing the "ſame word ſometimes as two ſyllables, and

" ſometimes as only one ſyllable, or two ſhort ones.
" We have frequent inſtances in *ſpirit*, *ruin*,
" *riot*, *reaſon*, *higheſt*, and ſeveral other words."
Thus he remarks on the following lines.

Whom reaſon hath equal'd, force hath made ſupreme

" Reaſon is to be pronounced here as one
" ſyllable, or two ſhort ones, as it is likewiſe in
" book viii. l. 591, and ix. 559.

It gives me great ſatifaction to find ſo judicious a critic as the biſhop of Briſtol, who hath conſidered Milton's poetry ſo attentively, agreeing with me almoſt intirely in what little he has ſaid upon Engliſh proſody, and plainly unacquainted with any neceſſity that an Engliſh voice labors under of lengthening acuted ſyllables. With all due reſpect I muſt however diſſent from his foregoing obſervation. The Engliſh idiom will not readily admit the eliſion of any final vowel except that of the article *the*, and modern poets uſe no other. But it ſeems very well to admit on many occaſions the method often uſed by the Italians of in-a-manner melting vowels together. At any rate a ſyllable ending with a vowel and followed by a vowel is always ſhort, and there will

will be found no inſtance in the Paradiſe Loſt where the final vowel will not be better pronounced than mute. Indeed one of the great defects of our ſpeech being a want of vowels, Milton's manner of aſſembling them was very judiciouſly imagined to remedy that want, and the effect is univerſally good. With regard to the pronunciation of two ſyllables as only one, or as two ſhort ones, it will be found that all the paſſages to which the biſhop alludes may be analyſed into ſeries of feet proper for Engliſh verſe, without either reducing the number of ſyllables, or making any one ſhort which is properly long. "As there are evidently, ſays Mr. "Shenſtone, words in Engliſh poetry that have "all the force of a dactyl, and, if properly "inſerted, have no ſmall beauty on that ac-"count, it ſeems abſurd to contract, or print "them otherwiſe than at length." *Eſſay on books and writers.* But of this more hereafter. Two things farther we muſt however remark now: very ſhort ſyllables, brevibus breviores, frequently occur in Engliſh pronunciation; and tho by far the greateſt part of our ſyllables come regularly and manifeſtly under the two heads long and ſhort, yet there are ſome few which can ſcarcely with ſufficient propriety be aſſigned to either

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either of thoſe diviſions. Theſe are ſuch whoſe vowel is followed by two conſonants diſtinctly pronounced, and conſequently requiring a double action of the voice, but the vowel itſelf of that imperfect kind noticed in the third ſection, being little more than the ſound we can give to a liquid without a vowel. The imperfection of this ſound is moſt eminent in the final *le* with a preceding conſonant, where the vowel, tho written after, is pronounced before the *l*; in the copulative *and*, and in *on* and *en* when immediately following an accented ſyllable, as in *reaſon*, *heaven*, *heavenly*. The biſhop of Briſtol frequently leaves out the ſecond *e* of *heaven*, and *heavenly*, but this ſeems wholly needleſs, for the pronunciation remains preciſely the ſame as when it is retained. This cropping of the vowel with the naſal utterance of the *n*, which is always uſed with it, forms the moſt ungraceful ſound in our pronunciation. Neither is it uſed conſtantly, nor are the occaſions when it is uſed pointed out by orthography accent or any thing but cuſtom. In ſolemn delivery however a fuller pronunciation of the vowel may be proper here, as on other occaſions, than is uſual in common diſcourſe. I have ſometimes left theſe uncertain and anomalous ſyllables without the mark of quantity.

It has been remarked, in the fifth Section, that emphaſis has a very particular power of lengthening monoſyllables, and that where their vowel is neceſſarily ſhort, it ſometimes extends even to ſemivowel-conſonants. This may be obſerved in the words *death* in the ſecond line of Paradiſe Loſt, and *ſing*, in the ſixth. The voice may dwell thus on ſemivowels even in polyſyllables that are emphatical, as on the firſt ſyllable of *illumin*, in the twenty-third line; which may thus be made long, tho the vowel will by no means admit protraction. The monoſyllable *till*, in the fourth line is made long by the ſucceeding word, which is always pronounced as if a *w* preceded the *o*. The letter *h* has not always equal power in our language. It is often wholly unnoticed by the voice, as in *honeſt*, *ſhepherd*: in ſome words it is a gentle aſpiration, and in others ſo ſtrong an aſpiration as to cauſe a delay of the voice equal to that of any conſonant. The experiment may be made by ſpeaking the words *an honeſt ſhepherd*, firſt as they are commonly ſpoken, and afterward giving to the *h* the ſame ſtrong aſpiration which is uſed in *home*, and *herd*. The cuſtom univerſally followed of uſing *an* for the indefinite article before words beginning with *h* unpronounced, and *a* ſimply before thoſe whoſe firſt vowel is ſtrongly aſpirated,

aſpirated, ſufficiently proves the mode of difference perceived by the generality of Engliſh ears. The ſtrong aſpirate has ſo far the power of a conſonant as to prevent any hiatus. I have marked the laſt ſyllable of *chaos*, agreeably to common pronunciation, which gives to the *o* the ſame long ſound as in croſs.

It is generally, I believe univerſally, agreed by thoſe learned men who have had the moſt extenſive knowledge of languages, that the ancient Greek was the moſt harmonious ever ſpoken in the world, and that the Latin held the ſecond rank. The moſt harmonious language will of courſe admit the moſt perfect mode of verſification; and if I aſſert that the poets of all nations uſe the moſt perfect mode of which their language is capable, experience will probably juſtify the obſervation.

We know that Greek and Latin verſe are fundamentally conſtituted by a certain regular diſtribution of long and ſhort ſyllables called meter, but that there was farther neceſſary to its perfection a proper diſpoſition of the accents, pauſe, and ceſure. Here then were four diſtinct requiſites to the poetical harmony of the two moſt

muſical

muſical languages in the world. Meter is the principal of theſe: accent, according to the united teſtimony of the ancient writers who have left any thing upon the ſubject, held the ſecond rank: the pauſe and ceſure are of inferior conſideration.

Until it was known what ſyllables in our language have a long, and what a ſhort quantity, it was impoſſible to diſcover how far our verſification is founded on meter. The quantity of ſyllables being determined, ſufficiently at leaſt for that purpoſe, if we examine any number of our moſt harmonious verſes we ſhall find the meter exceedingly irregular; too much ſo to be by any poſſibility the fundamental efficient of the harmony.

Accent appears to have been even in the Greek and Latin languages little leſs eſſential to the general harmony than meter itſelf. "Among "the conſtituent parts of perfect writing or "ſpeaking, which Dionyſius recites in his 19th "chapter, he mentions accents as ſuch: σχή-"μαμα παντοῖα καὶ ΤΑΣΕΙΣ φωνῆς αἱ καλούμεναι "ΠΡΟΣΩΔΙΑΙ, διάφοροι, κλεπτόσαι τῇ πει-"κιλίᾳ τὸν κόρον. *All kinds of rhetorical figures,* "*and different tones of voice that are called accents,* "*which*

" *which by their variety inſenſibly beguile us, and* " *prevent our being ſated and fatigued by an irkſome* " *repetition of the ſame ſound.* p. 153." The " ſame author in another part of his rhetorical " treatiſe has the following paſſage : μήτε ὀλιγο- " σύλλαβα πολλὰ ἐξῆς λαμβάνειν (κόπτεται γὰρ " ἡ ἀκρόασις) μήτε πολυσύλλαβα πλείω τῶν ἑκα- " νῶν, μηδὲ δὴ ΟΜΟΙΟΤΟΝΑ παρ' ὁμοιατό- " νοις, μηδὲ ὁμοιόχρονα παρ' ὁμοιοχρόνοις, περὶ συνθ. " *ib.* Neque paucarum ſyllabarum dictiones mul- " tas ordine aſſumamus (nam inde offenduntur " aures) neque plures ex polyſyllabis quam " neceſſe ſit, neque quæ eundem accentum, " neque quæ eadem tempora habent, prope inter " ſe componamus.

" Nor yet need we wonder at Ariſtotle, Dio- " nyſius, and the beſt rhetorical writers laying " ſo great a ſtreſs, as they do, on accent, as " eſſential to the perfection of compoſition. " The importance of it is grounded in the very " nature of things. For mere quantity, as hath " been remarked above, containing in general " only two meaſures, hath not variety enough to " conſtitute much harmony : but when we take " accent into our account, that is the compaſs " of four or five notes, each of which is capable

" of

" of two modifications in point of length, we
" have then eight or ten different modes of
" ſound to form harmony out of their various
" combinations. Theſe materials thus multiplied
" inlarge the foundation of harmony, and make
" it ſufficient for any poetical or oratorical
" rhythm which the human ear can require.

" Thoſe therefore who in conſidering the nu-
" meroſity of writings attend to quantity alone,
" regard only the inferior part of the ſubject
" before them. If they add to that the con-
" ſideration of accent, they will by thoſe means,
" and no others, be proper judges of the whole,
" and (to uſe the words of one who had a quick
" ſenſe of the powers of rhythm)

Pleas'd ſhall they hear, and learn the ſecret power
Of harmony, in TONES and numbers, hit
By voice or hand in various meaſur'd verſe."

Dr. Foſter has in this and other paſſages of his learned eſſay, produced many venerable authorities to prove the importance of accent to the harmony of human ſpeech in general, and of poetry in particular. But to theſe may be added a paſſage of Dionyſius which ſeems ſtrongly to the

the purpoſe: Ἔφην δὲ τὴν ακοὴν ἡδεσθαι ΠΡΩΤΟΙΣ μὲν τοῖς ΜΕΛΕΣΙΝ, ἔπειτα τοῖς ῥυθμοῖς ——ὅτι δὲ ἀληθῆ λέγω, τὴν πεῖραν αὐτὴν παρέξομαι μάρτυρα, ἣν ουκ ὂιόν τε διαβάλλειν, τοῖς κοινοῖς πάθεσιν ὁμολογουμένην. Τίς γὰρ ἔστιν ὃς ἔχ ὑπὸ μὲν ταύτης τ μελῳδίας ἄγεται ἢ γοητεύεται, ὑφ' ἑτέρας δέ τινος ουδὲν πάσχει τοιοῦτον, ἢ ὑπό μέν τούτων τῶν ῥυθμῶν οικειοῦται, ὑπὸ δε τούτων διοχλεῖται,—ἡ ακοὴ τέρπεται μὲν τοῖς μέλεσιν, ἄγεται δέ τοῖς ῥυθμοῖς—περι συνθ ιών. *The circumſtances which delight the ear are as I have obſerved, firſt melody, then cadence.* (He is here ſpeaking of the harmony of diſcourſe, whoſe melody is formed by accents. Throughout his treatiſe he conſtantly uſes the words μέλος and μελωδία when applied to language, to imply the effect of accent.)——*That this obſervation is true I appeal to experience and the common feelings of all; arguments incontrovertible. For who is not rapt, and inchanted by one melody, unaffected by another, charmed by one cadence, and by another diſguſted.——The ear is delighted with melodies, inraptured with cadences* ——A very little attention will evince that a certain rhythmical, or meaſured diſpoſition of the accent, is neceſſary not merely to the ſweetneſs, but to the

the very being of Engliſh verſe. After examining the foregoing twentyſix lines of Paradiſe Loſt, or any other piece of Engliſh poetry whatſoever, it will be found very difficult to ſay what alteration in the diſpoſition of the quantities will eſſentially alter the verſe; but a very ſlight tranſpoſition of the accents will deſtroy it intirely. Read the two firſt lines thus:

Of the frúit, and mán's fírſt diſobédience,
Of thát forbídden tréę whoſe táſte mórtal,

Make the quantities, by your manner of pronunciation, what you pleaſe, only let every word have its proper accentuation, and from very muſical verſe the lines become, not bad verſe, but no verſe, mere proſe. This ſeems proof fully ſufficient that ACCENT is the FUNDAMENTAL EFFICIENT of Engliſh verſification.

This poſition is by no means new. It has on the contrary been generally allowed, and its truth indeed ſcarcely ever doubted but by thoſe who having firſt miſtaken accent for quantity in the pronunciation of Greek and Latin, carry the ſame error with them to the conſideration of their own language. This remarkable difference between

between our verſe, and that of the Greeks and Latins that ours is fundamentally conſtituted by a meaſured diſpoſition of accents, theirs by a regular arrangement of long and ſhort ſyllables, has probably contributed not a little to the confounding of accent with quantity in the minds of ſo many learned men. For in this point our language is by no means ſingular, but agrees particularly with thoſe of the Italians and Spaniards, whoſe verſification is in all the moſt eſſential points, the very ſame with ours.

A queſtion however may here ariſe; in this accentual harmony, where the meter is allowed all kinds of irregularity, what becomes of the rhythmus, that very eſſential circumſtance of the general harmony of human ſpeech? To this I anſwer, it is univerſally allowed that the only two languages, which, as far as we know ever poſſeſſed the metrical verſification, were much ſuperior in their general harmony to thoſe which now poſſeſs the accentual. It muſt not therefore be expected that the accentual verſe will upon analyſing appear ſo perfect in all it's parts, as the metrical, and ſo well adapted to all the purpoſes of muſical delight. It is obvious that the rhythmus muſt be greatly

greatly inferior in regularity, and the melody in variety, for the confinement of the accent is to attone for the looſeneſs of the meter; and hence will reſult what may perhaps not improperly be called an accentual rhythmus. This point will however be farther illuſtrated in the ſequel.

But before we diſmiſs this ſubject intirely, I will take ſome notice of a paſſage in Dr. Foſter's eſſay, the only one I have any where met with which pretends to any proof that quantity is the fundamental efficient of the harmony of Engliſh verſe; and this I ſhall do not on account of any conviction which his proof carries with it, but becauſe it leads to ſome points to which it may be uſeful a little to advert. 'Notwithſtanding the con-'fidence, he ſays, with which it is often affirmed 'that Engliſh meter depends on accent, and not 'on quantity, which I have endeavoured to re-'fute; and tho I have allowed that accent jointly 'with quantity doth direct it; yet I cannot help 'thinking that the eſſence of it is founded in 'quantity alone.' I cannot find any thing like ſuch an endeavour as the doctor here ſpeaks of, thro' the whole eſſay, except in the paſſage immediately following; nor does he any where inform us what is the particular buſineſs of accent, and what

what of quantity in this joint direction. He proceeds: 'And to this I am induced by the 'following fact: let a Scotchman take ſome 'verſes of any of our poets, as theſe:

All hūman things are sūbjēct to decay,
And when fate sūmmons, mōnarchs muſt obey.

'He will pronounce them with the accent tranſ-'poſed, thus,

All hūmán things are ſubjéct to decay,
And when fate ſummóns, monárchs muſt obey.

'Now tho he alters the tones, and transfers the 'accute from the beginning to the end of words, 'yet in this pronunciation the meter ſtill eſſen-'tially ſubſiſts, becauſe founded in quantity, 'which is not violated by him. Did the meter 'depend on accent, it would be neceſſarily diſ-'turbed and deſtroyed by his tranſpoſition of that 'accent.' P. 68, 69. It appears from the context, and indeed ſufficiently from the paſſage itſelf, that Dr. Foſter by the meter means the cadence; for meter, in its ancient ſignification, cannot depend on accent.

Tho

Tho Dr. Foſter inſiſts ſo much upon the inability of us Engliſh to unite a ſhort qnantity with the acute accent, he nowhere queſtions our ability to give a long time to unaccented ſyllables. To refute his argument, it were therefore fully ſufficient to propoſe that an Engliſhman ſhould take thoſe two lines, and pronounce them with the accent tranſpoſed in the ſame manner as Dr. Foſter marks it for the Scotſman: for what will be the conſequence? The firſt line will be no verſe at all, and the cadence of the ſecond will be totally changed ſo as to become exactly like that of the well-known Doggrel,

A cóbler there wás, who lív'd in a ſtáll.

This may appear on firſt view, ſomething ſtrange. As therefore my purpoſe in refuting is to explain, we will examine it a little farther, and the wonder will ſoon vaniſh.

The Scots differ in this from all other people of whoſe pronunciation I have any knowledge, that their ſtrong accent is a grave, and that they conſtantly acute the laſt ſyllable of every word. Dr. Foſter has remarked that 'the circumflex, 'with which the Scotiſh pronunciation abounds,

is

'is not formed as the Greek, Latin, and Engli'liſh, of an acute and grave, but of a grave and 'acute: *νοῦς*, *rôs*, *rôûnd*, Engliſh; *ròûnd*, Scot.' When the Scots give the ſtrong accent to the laſt ſyllable of a word, it is always this circumflex, ſo that the laſt tone of every polyſyllable in Scotiſh pronunciation, is acute. I ſpeak this of the pronunciation of men of polite education among the Scots, as far as my obſervation goes, which has neither been none, nor very extenſive. It is well known that thoſe accuſtomed to Scotiſh pronunciation from infancy to manhood, can never entirely drop it, inſomuch that the moſt polite of the Scots are diſtinguiſhed more certainly in England by their ſpeech, than any tranſmarine people. But all well educated Scotſmen uniformly give their ſtrongeſt accent to the ſame ſyllable to which the Engliſh give it, and it is the ſtrongeſt accent, whether of higher or lower tone that will determine the accentual rhythmus. The accentuation therefore, as far as it can affect the conſtruction of verſe, is in both pronunciations eſſentially the ſame.

If we purſue the compariſon of Engliſh and Scotiſh pronunciation, we ſhall find that inſtead of proving the doctor's poſition, it will prove the direct

direct contrary: for though the accentuation of both produces the same accentual cadence, yet the quantities of syllables often vary in them widely. The most remarkable difference consists in this: English pronunciation frequently unites a short quantity with its strong acute: Scotish pronunciation, in giving its strong grave to the same syllables, almost always lengthens the vowel, and thus makes the syllable long. This will be manifest to those a little acquainted with the two pronunciations, in the following among innumerable other words: *mŏ́narch*, Eng. *mṑnarch*, Scot. *ŏ́rator*, Eng. *ṓrator*, Sc. (the Scots using the same sound in the first syllable of these two words which the English use in the first of *mōā́ning*, *and ōral*) *lĭ́berty*, Eng. *lī̀berty*, pron. *lè̀eberty* Sc. *sŭ́mmon*, Eng. *sŭ̀mmon*, pron. *soòmon*, Sc. Dr. Foster himself comes very near to acknowledging this, where he says that "the Scots pronounce "the same syllable long which we do, but they "make it longer;" page 74. a remark which is literally just of many syllables, long in English pronunciation with a short vowel by means of consonants, and farther lengthened in Scotish pronunciation by the production of the vowel: thus *súbject*, Eng. *sùbject*, pron. *soòbject*, Sc. *órder*, Eng. *òrder*, pron. *oàrder*, Sc. *exístence*, Eng. *exìstence*, pron. *exeèstence*, Sc. The reader will recol-

lect how perfectly conſiſtent this is with the accounts which Dr Foſter has extracted from the ancients, of the nature of the acute and grave accents, and which are inſerted in the 4th ſection of this eſſay

It will not be at all worth while to trouble the reader with any farther remarks upon what Dr. Foſter advances concerning Engliſh verſe. He does, what ſome other writers have done: he talks of ſpondees, pyrrhics, choriambics and epitrites, as if it were clear as daylight that thoſe names are properly applied to the combinations of Engliſh ſyllables to which he has aſſigned them; yet informs us of no one criterion by which to know the pyrrhic from the ſpondee, or a tribrachys from a moloſſus.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

WE proceed now to examine by what application of accents the accentual harmony is produced.

An Engliſh heroic verſe conſiſts generally of ten ſyllables. The fundamental diſpoſition of the accents is on every other ſyllable. It will occur to all, that ignorant people always force the accents into that order; and that thoſe of very groſs and untutored ears, if that order be deviated from, will with difficulty be made ſenſible of the harmony. The verſe is thus divided into five portions, conſiſting each of two ſyllables, the laſt accented. To theſe portions we may, I think, without any appearance of affectation, give the ancient name of feet. But thoſe of more refined ſenſations are ſoon diſguſted with the monotony of this movement. All our beſt poets therefore take care frequently to give the accent of the firſt foot to the firſt ſyllable inſtead of the ſecond. This variation has always a good effect, and with the fundamental diſpoſition, will make all the variety that in ſhort compoſitions the ear will require.

Theſe

Theſe then, and thus ſimple are the general rules for the conſtruction of Engliſh heroic verſe. It conſiſts of five feet, each having two ſyllables and one accent: the firſt foot has the accent indifferently on the firſt or ſecond ſyllable; the other four have it commonly on the ſecond only.

But as the ancient heroic occaſionally admits a ſpondee inſtead of a dactyl in the fifth place, and the ancient iambic many more deviations from its fundamental form, ſo the Engliſh heroic has ſeveral occaſional varieties. The ſecond, third, and fourth feet may either of them have the accent on their firſt ſyllable inſtead of the ſecond when the other feet retain the fundamental form; and when the firſt foot has the variation, the third, or the fourth may alſo have it. In ſpeaking of theſe variations hereafter I ſhall call them firſt, ſecond, third, and fourth variation, and firſt and ſecond double variation, according to the order in which they are above enumerated. All theſe variations muſt be very cautiouſly and ſparingly introduced. Beſide theſe, feet often occur with the ſtrong accent on both ſyllables; and frequently one foot, ſometimes two in a verſe, have the weaker accent only. This double accentuation, and weak accentuation

tion make a much leſs ſtriking difference than the variations, and may therefore be much oftener uſed than any of them except the firſt. A frequent introduction of the weaker-toned foot is even neceſſary; for the continued repetition of equal accents is offenſive.

I have already given ſome reaſons for preferring the Paradiſe Loſt to all other poems for examples of verſification. To theſe more may yet be added. When Milton determined to compoſe an epic poem, he had his form of verſe to chuſe; for in his own language he had no conſiderable authority to follow. He was an admirer, an imitator and an emulator of the Italian poets, yet could not be ſatisfied with the formality of their heroic ſtanza. The confinement of the couplet was perhaps ſtill leſs for his purpoſe. Blank verſe only remained. This had been very ſucceſsfully uſed by our dramatic writers; but its harmony was, in their works, too looſe and incorrect for an epic poem. This however he choſe, induced by that variety, that ſtrength of expreſſion, and that height of coloring which it can alone attain, and which his numbers, in many inſtances, ſo eminently poſſeſs. He thought it alſo capable of ſuch improvement and regulation

tion that it might, according to his own expreſſion, anſwer every purpoſe of muſical delight, and he has fully ſhown that he was not miſtaken. Yet notwithſtanding this he did not ſo far perfect his ſcheme of improvement but that he has left many harſh lines which generally diſpleaſe, and indeed cannot be defended. As therefore his verſification has greater excellencies than that of any other of our poets, and is at the ſame time not without blemiſhes, a review of both theſe will probably be as ready a way as can be taken to a full knowledge of the nature of Engliſh verſification. I ſhall enter upon this review the more readily for the ſake of contributing my mite toward doing juſtice to his admirable poem; not at all fearing that ſhowing any of its defects in their true colours will in the leaſt obſcure the brilliancy of its general merit.

The very firſt line of Paradiſe Loſt is an inſtance of a very muſical arrangement of the accents not often uſed by other poets, particularly rimers, who ſeldom venture to leave the ſecond ſyllable of the ſecond foot unaccented. Throughout Dr Akenſide's excellent poem on the pleaſures of imagination, tho without rime, I have obſerved but two inſtances of this arrangement.

They

They are both muſical lines, and in one the effect is remarkably good:

What! like a ſtorm from their capacious bed
The ſounding ſeas o'erwhelming when the might
Of theſe eruptions, working from the depth
Of mán's | ſtróng ap|prehenſion, ſhakes his frame
Ev'n to the baſe;——

B. II. l. 141,

———See the ſhining pair!
Behóld, || whére from || his dwelling now diſcloſed,
They quit their youthful charge, and ſeek the ſkies.

B. II. l. 396

Yet this may be more generally introduced than either of the other medial variations; for they have a harſh effect except a pauſe intervenes between them; as may be obſerved in the following inſtance:

Be not diſhearten'd then, nor cloud thoſe looks
That wont to be more chearful and ſerene
Than when | fair mor|ning—firſt | ſmíles on | the world.

P. L.

With the pauſe intervening they have always a good effect occaſionally introduced, and not repeated too frequently, and are uſed by all our poets.

The

The *double variation* of the accent, uſed with diſcretion, makes a very agreeable variety in the harmony; but Milton carries it beyond what ſeems conſiſtent with the regularity requiſite in epic verſe; and our modern poets on the contrary, ſeem unreaſonably fearful of admitting it. When however the accent is transferred from the ſecond to the firſt ſyllable of the firſt foot, and the pauſe follows the ſecond foot, the accent may alſo be transferred from the ſecond to the firſt ſyllable of the third foot; or, if the pauſe follows the third foot, the accent may be transferred from the ſecond to the firſt ſyllable of the fourth; and the effect will be perfectly good:

——So ſteers the prudent crane
Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air 431
Flō̄tes ās|thēy páſs,|-fán'd with|unnúm|ber'd plúmes,
P. L. VII.

Hów art|thou lóſt!|--hów, òn|a ſúd|den, lóſt! 900
P. L. IX.

Thrónes, and|impé|rial pówers;|—óffspring of heáven. P. II 310

——Laſt the bright conſummate flower 481
Spírits|odó|rous breáthes:|flówers and|their frúit,
Man's nouriſhment.—— P. L. IV.

The

The variation in the following paſſages, tho its effect be not diſagreeable, is plainly a ſtep farther removed from the original ſimple form of our epic pentameter:

———Soon had his crew
O'pen'd | into | the hill | a ſpá|cious woúnd,
And dig'd out ribs of gold.— 690
P. L. I.

———Thou thy foes 735
Júſtly | háſt in | deri|ſion, and | ſecúre
Laugh'ſt at their vain deſigns.—
P. L. V.

Hoarſe murmur ecchoed to his words applauſe
Thró' the | infi|nite hóſt; | nor léſs | for thát 873
The flaming ſeraph, &c.*——
P. L. V.

—What ſeem'd fair in all the world, ſeem'd now
Mean, or in her ſum'd up, in her contain'd,
And

* Poſſibly Milton might accentuate *infinite* on the ſecond ſyllable, and preſerve the long ſound of the *i* that is uſed in the firſt ſyllable of *finite*.

And in her looks, which from that time infuſed
Sweetneſs | ínto | my heárt, | unfélt | beſóre. 475
P. L. VIII.

This double variation has been juſtly rejected by later poets from our epic pentameter, but ſeems by no means improper in dramatic verſe. Our common dramatic verſe is a pentameter of the ſame kind with the heroic, differing only in that greater latitude is allowed to it: every good heroic therefore is a good dramatic verſe, but every good dramatic verſe will not be good as an heroic.

In the laſt mentioned double variation, which may be perhaps not improperly called the dramatic double variation, if the accent of the firſt foot is very weak, the effect will be very bad; unfit even for dramatic verſe:

———I come thy guide
Tò the | gárden | of blíſs, | thy ſeát | prepáred.
P. L.

We here-and-there find in the Paradiſe Loſt a foot intirely unaccented. Such a foot cannot with any propriety be ſaid to form an accentual cadence.

In

In this it reſembles the ancient pyrrhic, the only foot of ancient verſification which did not of itſelf form a complete rhythmus. The unaccented foot is accordingly always followed by a foot doubly accented, and thus a compound foot is formed analogous to the ancient ionic. This accentual ionic appears almoſt too great an irregularity for heroic verſe; yet it makes no unmuſical variety; and emphaſis is occaſionally ſo much aſſiſted by ſuch a diſpoſition of the accents that one ſhould be unwilling to exclude it intirely. In dramatic poetry it may always have place:

Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives
A'fter| this mór|tal chánge| to her| trúe ſérvants
Amóng |the en|thrón'd Góds| on ſáinted ſéats.
COMUS.

——————— Their way
Liés thró | the per|pléxt páths| of thís | dréar wóod.
COMUS, l. 37.

I ſee ye viſibly, and now believe
That hé, | the ſu|préme Goód,| t'whom áll |things ill,
Are but as ſlaviſh officers of vengeance.
COMUS.

The

The effect is improved by the pauſe dividing the unaccented foot, ſo much as to make it, I think, unexceptionable even for heroic verſe:

To whóm|the fa|ther,—with|oút cloúd,|ſeréne.
P. L. X. 45.

The accent can ſcarcely be diſpenſed with in the firſt foot even of a dramatic verſe:

——— till ſhe quite loſe
The di|víne pró|perty|òf hèr|fírſt béing. 469
COMUS

I do not recollect to have ſeen any where a line ſimilar to the following:

——— his magnetic beam—
Shoóts in|víſible|vírtue|éven to|the deép.
P. L. III. 586.

The movement is ſpirited, muſical, and admirably ſuited to dramatic poetry, but ſcarcely conſiſtent with that regularity which the dignity of the epos requires. It were however rather in the ſpirit of hypercriticiſm to blame the introduction of a ſingle line of that kind into a long poem; and

and when, as in the foregoing inſtance, no other form of verſe would equally aſſiſt the expreſſion, the poet perhaps deſerves high commendation for it.

Double accentuation, or the accentuating of both ſyllables of a foot, is occaſionally uſed by all our poets. It has always a good effect when at leaſt one of the accents is emphatical, and ſeldom otherwiſe. The mark of the circumflex accent is uſed in the following paſſages to denote emphaſis.

The birds their quire apply; /âirs, vêr|nal airs,
Breathing the ſmell of field and grove, attune
Their trembling leaves, while univerſal Pan,
Knit with the graces and the hours in dance,
Led on the eternal ſpring. | Nôt thât | fâir fiêld
Of Enna, where Proſérpin, gathering flowers,
Herſelf a fairer flower by gloomy Dis
Was gather'd, whích cóſt Cé|res | all that pain
To ſeek her thro the world; nor thât | ſwêet gróve
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inſpired
Caſtalian ſpring, might with this paradiſe
Of Eden ſtrive.——

P. L. IV. 264.

On heavenly ground they ſtood, and from the ſhore
They veiw'd the vaſt, immeaſurable abyſs,
Outrageous as a ſêa; | dârk, wâſte|ful, wild,

Up

Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And ſurging waves, as mountains to aſſault
Hêaven's hígth, | and with the center mix the pole.

Silence, ye troubled waves, and thôu | dêep, pêace,
Said then th' omnific word.—

P. L. VII. 217.

——— To the nuptial bower
I led her, bluſhing like the morn: | âll hêaven
And happy conſtellations ón | thât hôur
Shed their ſelecteſt influence; the earth
Gave ſign of gratulation, and êach hîll:
Joyous the bîrds; frêſh gáles, | and gentle airs
Whiſper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flûng rôſe, | flûng ô|dors from the ſpicy ſhrub
Diſporting, till the amorous bird of night
Súng ſpôu|ſal and | bíd hâſte | the evening ſtar
On his | hîll tóp, | to light the bridal lamp.

P. L. VIII. 510.

From his | ſlâck hánd | the garland wreath'd for Eve
Dôwn drôpt | and all the faded roſes ſhed.

P. L. IX. 892.

There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
The ſentence from thy head removed, may light
On mê, | ſôle câuſe | to thee of all this woe,

Me

Mê, mê | ônly | jûſt object of his ire.
P. L. X. 933.

Hôw ſoôn | hath thy prediction, ſeer bleſt,
Meaſured this tranſient world, the race of time,
Till tîme | ſtând fixt? | Beyond is all abyſs,
Eternity, whoſe end nô éye | can reach.
P. L. XII. 552.

In theſe paſſages the duplication of the accent not only gives force, but makes a very agreeable variety in the harmony. The reader will have obſerved one bad line among them, the 8th of the firſt extract, where three accents meet without any emphaſis. A more frequent iteration of the doubled accent than what may be obſerved in theſe paſſages, where it never occurs more than twice in one line, will always load the harmony, but may ſometimes add prodigiouſly to the expreſſion:

——— Thus roving on
In con/fûſed mârch, | forlorn, th'adventurous bands
With ſhuddering horror pale, and eyes aghaſt,
Viéw'd fîrſt | their lamentable lot, and found
Nô rêſt: | thro many a dark and dreary vale
They paſs'd, and many a region dolorous,

O'er

O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rôcks, câves, lâkes, fêns, bôgs, dêns, and ſhâdes of dêath:
A univerſe of death, which God by curſe
Made evil, for evil only good;
Where âll life dîes, deâth lîves, and nature breeds
Perverſe, âll mônſtrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worſe
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimæras dire.

P. L. II.

——— So eagerly the fiend
O'er bôg, or ſteep, through ſtrâit, rough, dênſe, or rare,
With hêad, hands, wings, or fêet purſues his way,
And ſwîms, or ſinks, or wâdes, or crêeps, or flîes.

P. L. II.

——— He ſhall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere,
And they ſhall bé one flêſh, one hêart, one ſôul.

P. L. VIII.

——— Theſe delicacies
I mean of tâſte, ſight, ſmêll, herbs, frûit, and flôwers,
Walks, and the melody of birds.

P. L. VIII.

I am

I am to brûiſe | his hêel.
His ſeed, | whên ſs | not fet, | ſhall brûiſe | my hêad:
P. L. X.

It may be obſerved that no line in theſe extracts is more loaded with the frequent repetition of the emphaſis than the 950th of the II. book, where an unaccented ſyllable intervenes between every emphatical one. A verſe thus divided by four equal pauſes into five equal parts exactly ſimilar in time and tone, would, on ordinary occaſions, diſpleaſe greatly: here it is, on account of the expreſſion, admirable. By compariſon of theſe paſſages with the foregoing may be ſeen the difference between that double accentuation, which not only adds force, but is conſiſtent with the higheſt degree of ſweetneſs, and ſuch an iteration of the accent as, being not inconſiſtent with the requiſite degree of harmony, may be occaſionally introduced for the ſake of expreſſion.

I have been the more copious in theſe extracts becauſe ſome of our critics have been not leſs unreaſonable in defending, and even applauding abſonous lines, than our poets are in their fear of introducing almoſt any variety in their numbers. It is obſerved of Shakeſpear that his numbers are generally looſe and coarſe, or regu-

lar and poliſhed in proportion to the dignity of his ſubject or of his ſpeakers. His clowns joke and blunder in unadorned proſe. When perſons of higher rank converſe on ſerious ſubjects, the dialogue is thrown into a looſe meaſure. But when kings and heroes appear in all the dignity of their characters, his verſe is highly poliſhed, and the language differs from common converſation as much in the numbers, as in the matter and ſtile. I have already mentioned the principal difference between our dramatic and heroic verſe. But there is, beſide the greater latitude allowed in the ſtructure of the former, another difference peculiar to that ſpirited manner of dialogue of which Shakeſpear was the firſt author, and remains the great example. This can only be explained by an inſtance.

The biſhop of Briſtol obſerves that the double accentuation, when it concludes a line as in P. L. VII. 216, quoted above, "is a beauty of the "ſame kind as the ſpondee in the fifth place in "Greek and Latin hexameters, of which there "are ſome memorable examples in Virgil; as "when he ſpeaks of low valleys, Georg. III. 276.

Saxa

Saxa per, et ſcopulos, et depreſſas convalles.

" or when he would deſcribe the majeſty of the " gods, Ecl. IV. 49.

Cara deum ſoboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.

Æn. VIII. 679.

——— Penatibus, et magnis diis.

" or great caution, and circumſpection, Æn. II. 68.

Conſtitit, atque oculis Phrygia agmina circumſpexit.

" or a great interval between two men running, Æn. V. 320.

Proximus huic, longo ſed proximus intervallo."

The effect certainly is ſomething of the ſame kind: but the biſhop adds, " the learned and " ingenious Mr. Upton, in his critical obſerva- " tions, hath given us a parallel inſtance out of " Shakeſpear, and ſays that no poet did ever " equal

"equal this beauty but Shakeſpear." In Macbeth, act. 2.

What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. Hark! peace!"

This line is to me widely different from any in the Æneid or Paradiſe Loſt; of a kind peculiar to the drama, and not even admiſſible into epic poetry. Its peculiarity conſiſts not in the ſtructure of the verſe, but in the aſſemblage of ideas, and the ſtile of expreſſion; tho to this peculiarity the ſtructure of the verſe is admirably adapted:

What hath | quênch'd thêm |----hath gîven | mê fîre.---Hârk!----pêace!

Hundreds of ſuch lines might be found in Shakeſpear, calculated not to be red, but to be acted; and few, perhaps none, will even conceive their full force and beauty who have not ſeen Mr Garrick in Shakeſpear's principal characters, or Mrs. Pritchard in that to which the above quoted line belongs. When the aſtoniſhing powers of Shakeſpear's pen have been felt at the theatre, the impreſſion is eaſily revived in the cloſet, and the emotion excited there by the ſkill of the actor ſeconding

ſeconding the intention of the poet, is here attributed to ſomething inherent in the verſe only. Nothing is more peculiar in Shakeſpear's dramas than the ſcope given to the actor's powers. But to preſerve clear our idea of poetical harmony it is abſolutely neceſſary to diſtinguiſh between ſtrength of expreſſion, and ſweetneſs of meaſure. An emphatical, and a muſical arrangement of words are in themſelves wholly different, tho either may occaſionally aſſiſt the other. But emphaſis having ſo cloſe a connection with accent, the ruling power of our harmony, it is not much wonder that the powers of expreſſion, and the powers of harmony ſhould have been ſometimes confounded.

It has been mentioned that neither of the double variations, nor the third and fourth ſingle variation can take place except the pauſe immediately precedes. Moſt of the abſonous lines in Paradiſe Loſt are faulty from want of attention to this point only;

——— Gracious was that word which cloſed
Thy ſóv|ran ſén|tence,---thàt | mán ſhould|fínd gráce.
P. L. III. 145.

——— To

——— To hell
Drew áf|ter hìm |—the whóle | ráce of | mankínd.
P. L. III. 161.

——— Well thou com'ſt
Befóre | thy fél|lows,---ám|bítious | to wín
From me ſome plume. P. L. VI. 161.

——— Firm they might have ſtood,
Yet féll: |---remém|ber,---and | feár to | tranſgréſs.
P. L. VI. 912.

——— With lies
Drew áf|ter hìm |---the thírd | párt of | héaven's hóſt.
P. L. V. 710.

The biſhop of Briſtol has a note upon this laſt quoted line: "Dr. Bentley" ſays he, "finds "fault with this verſe as very bad meaſure; but "as a perſon of much better taſte obſerves, there "is a beauty in the fall of the numbers in this "line after the majeſty of thoſe before and after "it;" and he adds that it is "an artifice often "made uſe of by Milton to vary his numbers by "diſcords." Concerning the effect of this line, which is matter of mere taſte, where opinion only can be oppoſed to opinion, I ſhall not interfere between ſuch reſpectable authorities.

I ſhall

I ſhall only obſerve, that if it be allowable to introduce proſe, and that very inharmonious proſe, into an epic poem, for the ſake of diſcord, this line may be good; otherwiſe certainly not.

There are a few lines in the Paradiſe Loſt, abſonous from multiplied variations, and other faults in the accentuation ſomething different from thoſe already mentioned, but ſcarcely deſerving particular notice.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

WHEN any piece of Engliſh verſification is analyſed, the firſt 26 lines of Paradiſe Loſt for inſtance, great variety of feet will appear. That which from the nature of our language moſt frequently occurs is the ſpondee: the iambic and trochee are nearly equally common; the pyrrhic is more rarely found. No one of theſe is excluded from any particular part of the verſe. It requires ſo much judgment and caution to introduce triſsyllabic feet into our heroic verſe without hurting the ſmoothneſs of the flow, that, Milton excepted, our poets ſeldom attempt it; yet he has made ſuch noble uſe of them, has added ſo much to the dignity as well as variety of his verſification by them, that there ſeems ſufficient encouragement, notwithſtanding the difficulty, to follow ſo great an example.

Of the many lines in the Paradiſe Loſt which have triſſyllabic feet, there is ſcarcely a ſingle indifferent one. Many are uncommonly muſical moſt uncommonly majeſtic, and ſome uncommonly expreſſive:

His form had yet not loſt
All hĕr | ōrĭ′gĭ|nāl brīght|nēſs, nŏr | ăppēar'd
Leſs than archangel ruin'd.—

P. L. I. 593.

——— With grave
Aſpect he roſe, and in his riſing ſeem'd
Ă pĭ′llăr | ōf ſtāte: | dēep ŏn | hīs frōnt | īngrāvĕn
Deliberation ſat, and public care.

II. 303

In hĕ′aven|lў ſpĭ′rĭts | cōuld ſŭch | pērvērſe|nēſs dwēll?

VI. 788.

Crŏwn'd thēm|wĭth glo|rў ā′nd tŏ|thēir glō|·ў nāmed
Thrones, dominations——

V. 840.

———And ſeem to caſt
Ŭ′mĭnoūs | cōnjēc|tūre ōn | thĕ whōle | ſūccēſs.

II. 123.

Dămās|cŏ, ōr | Mărŏ′ccŏ, | ōr Trĕ|bĭſond.

I. 584.

Tŏ whōm | thŭs Evē, |wĭth pēr|fēct beāu|tў ădō′rn'd.

IV. 634.

In Pontus, or the Punic coaſt, or where

Al-

Ālcĭnŏ|ūs rēign'd, | frūit ŏf | āll kīnds, | īn cōat
Rough or ſmooth rin'd. —— V. 342.

Αλκίνοος δὲ τότ' ἦρχε θεῶν ἄπο μήδεα εἰδώς.
Odyſſ. VI. 12.

O'ēr măńy | ă frō'|zēn măńy | ă fĭ'ĕrў Ālp,
Rōcks, cāves, | lākes, fēns, | bōgs, dēns, | ānd
ſhādes | ōf dēath.
II. 621.

The admirable contraſt in theſe two lines can eſcape no reader's notice. They are quoted above in the paſſage at large, where the following line, compoſed almoſt intirely of ſhort ſyllables, with only three ſtrong accents, but thoſe all ſtrongly emphatical, has alſo a wonderful effect:

Ăbô|mĭnăblĕ, | ĭnſûffĕrablĕ, | ānd wôrſe
Than fables, &c. ——

—— Torture without end
Still ūrgĕs, ānd | ă fĭ'e|rў dĕlūge fed
With everburning ſulphur unconſumed.
I. 69.

I ſhall perhaps riſk the accuſation of refinement if I ſay that the concurrence of ſhort ſyllables here,

here, as well as in the 620 line of the ſecond book juſt above quoted, expreſſes very happily the volatility of the torturing element. I doubt not however but many feel that power in them.

——— All unawares,
Flŭ′ttĕrĭng | hīs pĕ′n|nōns vā′in, | plûmb dôwn | hĕ drō′ps
Ten thouſand fathom deep.———

II. 934.

It will be difficult to find in any language a more beautiful example than this of the expreſſion of poetical numbers, and the ecchoing of the ſound to the ſenſe. Nor was it without reaſon that Milton wrote *pennons* rather than the common word *pinions*. That kind of conſonant power of delaying the voice which the letter *i* has in ſuch ſituations, will be ſtrongly apparent if the word *pinions* be uſed in this line inſtead of *pennons*.

The tribrachys is alſo not without its effect in the following paſſage:

--------- Store hereafter from the earth
Up hither, like aerial vapors, flew,

Of all | things tran|sitory | and vain, | when sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men.

III. 447.

The dactyles, the nobleſt and moſt majeſtic, as Longinus obſerves, of all meaſures, are introduced with peculiar propriety, and ſtriking effect in the two next paſſages:

Nor was his ear leſs peal'd
With noi|ſes loud | and ru|inous, (to | compare
Great things | with ſmall) than when | Bello|na ſtorms,
With all | her bat|t'ring en|gines bent | to raiſe
Some ca|pital ci|ty, | or leſs | than if | this frame
Of heaven | were falling.-------

II. 925.

And thou, | my Word, | begot|ten ſon, | by thee
This I | perform: | ſpeak thou, | and be | it done:
My o|verſha|dowing ſpi|rit | and might | with thee
I ſend along.-------

VIII. 166.

From theſe examples it appears that the dactyl, anapeſt, and tribrachys, have always, if not too frequently repeated, a good effect in our epic pentameter. There are many lines in the Paradiſe Loſt by no means bad, which have triſſyl-

labic

labic feet with two long ſyllables, but then either the ſhort ſyllable is very ſhort, brevi brevior, or one of the longer ſyllables is of the doubtful kind. Theſe feet however ſeem leſs agreeable to the nature of our verſe, and generally give a degree of heavineſs to the flow. Their uſe therefore in the epic pentameter is not to be commended. Even the amphibrachys will ſcarcely be ſo agreeable to nicer ears as the dactyl, anapeſt, and tribrachys. In the dramatic pentameter greater liberties are allowed in the meter, as well as in the accentuation: the uſe of the redundant or hyperrhythmical unaccented ſyllable at the end of the line is unlimited: a hyperrhythmical ſyllable at the pauſe will never offend if not too frequently repeated;

Offering --------
His orient liquor in a cryſtal glaſs
To quench | the drouth | ōf Phōébūs, |---which
as | they taſte,
-----their human countenance is changed-----
COMUS. 66.

---------- I was awſtruck,
And as | I paſt, | ī wō′rſhīpt: |---if thoſe you ſeek
It were a journey like the path to heaven. 303.

But

But for | that damn'd | măjĭ'cĭān, |--let him be girt
With all the griſly legions, &c.-------

603.

There may be found inſtances of other licences not diſagreeable in dramatic which would certainly diſpleaſe in heroic verſe:

----In another country, as he ſaid,
Bore a | bright gol|dĕn flŏ'wĕr, |--bŭt nŏ't ĭn | thĭ's
sŏ'il.

COMUS. 633.

In the foregoing paſſages are inſtances of the accent on every ſyllable of the triſſyllabic foot. It is allowable on the firſt, only where it may be on the firſt of diſſyllabic feet. In other places it is moſt muſical on the ſecond. The 634 line of the IV. book is a ſingular inſtance of an anapeſt accented on the laſt, concluding a verſe, where the effect is very good.

A line is neceſſarily bad whoſe accentuation is bad. If that be good the verſe cannot be abſolutely bad, but may be heavy, weak, ſpirited, or majeſtic according to the meter. It is by the accentuation that our verſe is primarily divided into feet, and in analyſing verſe the metrical diviſion muſt always be determined by the accentual.

There

There are ſome lines in Milton with triſſyllabic feet whoſe meter and accentuation diſagree:

——— Color'd with the florid hue
Of rai'nbōws, ānd ſtă'rrў eў'es. The wā'tērs thū's
With fiſh repleniſh'd, *&c.*

P. L. VII. 447.

Guided by the accentuation only, one ſhould aſſign the three firſt ſyllables of this line to the firſt foot, as in the 302 line of the II. book above quoted: but ſcarcely any ear can be ſo dull or ſo prejudiced as not to perceive the wide difference in length between theſe ſyllables and thoſe, and that the effect here is by no means ſo good. Attending to the meter alone, one ſhould rather give the two firſt ſyllables only to the firſt foot, the three following to the ſecond. But this kind of triſſyllabic foot, ſcarcely of itſelf allowable in the epic pentameter, more particularly requires the accent on the ſecond ſyllable, where its effect is moſt muſical. There remains yet to compoſe the two firſt feet of two ſyllables each, and, admitting the licence of transferring the accent from one foot to the ſucceeding foot, to give three ſyllables, two of them ſtrongly accented, to the third foot. But the addition of the unaccented ſyllable to this

foot

foot thus doubly accented, makes it too much overbalance the reſt. The line is to the ear by no means ſo pleaſing as thoſe in the preceding examples of the epic pentameter, and the reaſon of this clearly appears from the analyſis. In dramatic verſe ſuch a line might be admitted.

Sometimes however for the ſake of particular expreſſion ſuch irregularities in the meter may be allowable and even commendable in heroic verſe.

——— Bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gă'mbōl'd | bĕfō're | thēm:--th'ūnwī'el | dў ĕ' | lĕphānt
To make them mirth uſed all his might.
IV. 346.

The biſhop of Briſtol, with Dr Bentley, ſuppoſes that Milton intended the word unwieldy to be accented on the firſt, and with that accentuation admires the fitneſs of the ſound to the ſenſe. With the common accentuation of the word however, the accentuation of the verſe is equally good; and the expreſſion, from the foot of three long ſyllables, perhaps greater:

———Part huge of bulk
Wă'llŏwĭng | ūnwī'el | dў, ĕnō'rmŏus ī'n | theīr gā'it,

Tempeſt the ocean.

VII. 412.

This line has alſo been admired for its expreſſive unwieldineſs. Its form, is however of a kind perfectly muſical, and by no means peculiarly ſuited to give the idea of unwieldineſs. The expreſſion is in reality not numerical but literal; a kind of expreſſion of which our language has much more than the Latin or any of the deſcendents of the Latin; perhaps more than the Greek itſelf. When uſed without affectation it has an agreeable and powerful effect in deſcriptive poetry, and there are many beautiful examples of it in Milton's account of the creation. It has been little regarded by the generality of our critics, but a living writer, whoſe many learned, elegant, and judicious criticiſms I cordially admire, tho obliged to combat his proſodiacal tenets, has honored it with particular notice. In the 933 line of the ſecond book of Paradiſe Loſt above quoted is a beautiful inſtance of the union of literal and numerical expreſſion.

In our more modern poems only one inſtance of the triſſyllabic foot deſerving particular notice has fallen under my obſervation. It is in Philips's Cyder:

Cyder: the accentuation, meter, pauſe, and elementary ſounds all concur to make the expreſſion great:

——Now the lowring ſky,
And baleful lightning, and the thunder,—voice
Of ā′n|grў gō′ds,| thāt răttlēd| ſō′lēmn,/—dīſmā′id
The ſinking hearts of men.

The 249 line of the ninth book of Paradiſe Loſt is an Alexandrin, the only one in the poem:

Fōr ſō′|lĭtū̆de | sōmetī′mes | īs bē̆ſt | sŏcĭ′|ĕtў̆.

The Alexandrin is commonly defined a verſe with the heroic cadence, conſiſting of twelve ſyllables. But the 923 line of the ſecond book and the 165 and 411 of the ſeventh are verſes of twelve ſyllables with the heroic cadence, yet as widely different from the Alexandrin as any other of our heroic verſes can be. Hence is evident the propriety and convenience of dividing our verſes by feet rather than by ſyllables. Hence alſo it appears that the diviſion into feet is primarily determined by the accentuation, in ſurbordination only to which our verſe can be metrically analyſed. An Alexandrin muſt then be defined

defined a verſe of the heroic cadence, and conſiſting of ſix feet.

The ancient hexameter admitting but two different feet, one lively and ſpirited, the other ſlow and ſolemn, but both of an equally majeſtic progreſſion, it could be varied only to expreſſions of celerity, livelineſs, and ſpirit, or of ſlowneſs, gravity, and ſtrength, always retaining nearly an equal degree of majeſty. Here the Engliſh pentameter has an advantage of which Milton knew well how to make the proper uſe. It is not confined to a preciſe number of times, but has generally from fifteen to eighteen; ſo that theſe may be ca'led the medial numbers. It may occaſionally have nineteen or twenty times with very good effect, but if fewer than fifteen it will hardly avoid weakneſs. It admits various feet: the ſpondee, iambic, and trochee without reſerve: the pyrrhic, dactyl, anapeſt, and tribrachys, and ſometimes other triſſyllabic feet, under ſome reſtrictions which the ear alone can determine. A verſe formed of the three firſt ſorts of feet, ſo as to have a medial number of times, and no peculiarity of pauſe or accentuation, will be ſimply muſical. If the expreſſion requires peculiar gravity or ſlowneſs, a line compoſed intirely of

ſpondees

ſpondees will produce the effect. If a more ſpirited majeſty of expreſſion be required, the dactyl and anapeſt are introduced with vaſt advantage among ſpondees. The ſame extraordinary number of times is preſerved; vigor is added by the rapid flow of the ſhort ſyllables, and the harmony becomes much more pleaſing. The pyrrhic and tribrachys are happily adapted to produce effects directly contrary to thoſe of the ſpondee. The reader may compare the effects of the different metrical feet which he will have obſerved in the quotations interſperſed thro this ſection, with the characters given of them by Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus. He will not expect to find theſe effects ſo great as they are ſaid to have been in the Greek language, but after having obſerved ſome degree of them in his own language, he will have no difficulty in conceiving a much higher degree of them in a ſpeech of whoſe harmony meter was the fundamental efficient.

Meter then, as we have already obſerved, is not the fundamental efficient of Engliſh poetical harmony, but a mean of variety, and a powerful inſtrument of expreſſion. In either light it is incapable of being reduced within certain rules,

but

but muſt be left much to the direction of the ear.* The attentive obſerver will however find in general, that a redundance of quantity is better than a deficiency: a ſyllable more than the uſual number, if properly introduced, will never have ſo ill an effect as a time leſs than the loweſt medial quantity. Yet emphaſis has a powerful effect in ſupplying or attoning for any deficiency of time. A line with two or three ſtrong emphaſes will not appear weak tho almoſt every ſyllable be naturally ſhort, and no foot have more than two ſyllables

* Optime autem de illa judicant aures—Quædam arte tradi non poſſunt. Quint. Inſt. Or. IX. 4.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

THE pauſe is perhaps of equal importance with meter both to the harmony and expreſſion of Engliſh verſe. "Mr. Pope," ſays the biſhop of Briſtol, "in a letter to Mr. Walſh "containing ſome critical obſervations on Engliſh "verſification, remarks that in any ſmooth "Engliſh verſe of ten ſyllables, there is naturally a pauſe at the fourth, fifth, or ſixth ſyllable, "and upon the judicious change and management of theſe, depends the variety of verſification. But Milton varies the pauſe thro "all the ten ſyllables, and ſcarcely ever ſuffers "it to reſt upon the ſame ſyllable in more than "two, and ſeldom in ſo many as two verſes "together." The pauſe is certainly in general moſt pleaſing at the end of the ſecond, or at the middle or end of the third foot; and rimed verſe, which Pope chiefly intended, will ſeldom admit it elſewhere: But Milton has numberleſs very muſical lines with the pauſe in every other poſſible poſition. The following beautiful paſſage has in it every place except in the middle

of

of the third foot, and the middle the laſt foot. Four inſtances of it in the former of theſe ſituations, may be ſeen in the opening lines of Paradiſe Loſt before quoted, and in the latter it may be obſerved in one of the lines juſt quoted from Philips, as well as in ſeveral of the Paradiſe Loſt:

——He on his ſide
Leā'nīng | hā'lf-rā'is'd, |--wīth loō'ks | ōf cō'r|diāl lō've
Hûng ō'|vĕr hĕ'r | ĕnă'|mōr'd,—ā'nd | bĕhē'ld
Beā'utў, |—whīch whĕ'|thēr wā'kĭng ŏ'r | ăſleē'p
Shō't fō'rth | pĕcū'|liār grā'|cēs;—thē'n | wīth vō'ice
Mī'ld,—ās | whēn Zĕ'|phўrŭ's | ōn Flō'|ra brē'athes,
Her hā'nd|ſōft toŭ'ch|īng,--whī'ſpēr'd thûs:--Ăwake
Mў fā'ir|eſt,—mў' | ēſpōu's'd,|—mў' lā'|tēſt foū'nd,
Heáven's lā'ſt | bē'ſt gī'ft,|—mў' ē'|vēr nē'w |dĕlīght,
Ăwā'ke:-|-thĕ mō'r|nīng ſhī'nes,-|-ā'nd thĕ|frē'ſh fiē'ld
Cā'lls ūs:—wē lō'ſe| thĕ prī'me |tŏ mā'rk |hō'w ſprī'ng
Oūr tē'n|dēd plā'nts;--hō'w blō'ws | thĕ cĭ'|rōn grove,
Whā't drō'ps|thĕ my'rrh,--ānd whā't|thĕ bāl|mў rēēd,
Hō'w nā'|tūre paĭ'nts | hēr cŏ'|lōrs —hō'w |thĕ bēē
Sĭ'ts ōn | thĕ bloō'm-|-ēxtrā'c|tīng lĭ'quīd ſwēēt.

P. L. V. 25.

The

The biſhop of Briſtol mentions two lines which have no pauſe but at the end:

——Thou that day
Thy father's dreadful thunder didſt not ſpare.
P. L. III. 393.

Attended with ten thouſand thouſand ſaints.
VI. 767.

Many ſuch lines might be found where the ſenſe requires no pauſe; but the voice will always naturally, and conſiſtently with the ſtricteſt propriety, make one ſufficient to mark the diviſion of the verſe; as, in the firſt of the lines juſt quoted, at the middle of the fourth foot, in the other at the middle of the ſecond foot.

The effects of the pauſe are ſo obvious that a few remarks on them will ſuffice. No form of verſification admits ſo great, ſo pleaſing, or ſo emphatical a variety in the diſpoſition of the pauſe as the Engliſh pentameter; and no poet has been ſo happy in adapting it to the ſeveral purpoſes of ſimple variety, agreeable diviſions of the harmony, and ſtrong expreſſion as Milton. The pauſe in general divides the harmony moſt agreeably,

ably, as we have already obſerved, when placed at the end of the ſecond, or at the middle or end of the third foot. When ſituated more forward, or more backward, the flow will be generally moſt pleaſing if there is another, but inferior pauſe toward the other end of the line; and with this precaution it may, as we have ſeen, be perfectly agreeable in any ſituation. But as thoſe accentual variations which differ moſt from the fundamental arrangement, tho they have occaſionally a good effect, will yet diſpleaſe by too frequent repetition; ſo a reiteration of theſe leſs natural diviſions of the verſe will throw the meaſure off its balance, and offend the ear.

Expreſſion is moſt eminently aſſiſted by the pauſe, when it immediately follows an emphatical word at the beginning of a line, or precedes one at the end of a line. Milton has very many ſtriking inſtances of this, few of which are unnoticed by his right reverend editor. Many of them occur in the extracts ſcattered through this ſection, and the reader may not be diſpleaſed to compare theſe with the following which the biſhop has produced from among many more in Homer:

Αὐταὰρ ἔπει τ αὐτοῖσι βέλος ἐχεπευκὲς ἐφιέις
Βάλλ'.——αἰεὶ δὲ πυραὶ νεκύων καίοντο θαμειαί.

IL. I. 51.

Τὸν δ' ἕτερον ξίφεϊ μεγάλῳ κληῖδα παρ' ὦμον
Πλῆξ'.—απο δ' αὐχένος ὦμον ἔέργαθεν, ἠδ' ἀπὸ νώτου.

IL. V. 146.

---- Πατέρι δὲ γόον χ κήδεα λυγρὰ
Λεῖπ',—ἐπεὶ ὰ ζώοντε μάχης ἐκνοσήσαντε
Δέξατο.

IL. V. 156.

He has alſo added the following from Pope's Homer,

Chariots on chariots roll: the claſhing ſpokes
Shock;——while the madding ſteeds break
ſhort their yokes.

XII. 445.

And this from the temple of fame:

Amphion there the loud creating lyre
Strikes

Strikes,——and behold, a ſudden Thebes aſpire. 86.

But rimed verſe, as on many other accounts ſo particularly from its cramping the variation of the pauſe, is far inferior to unrimed. This emphatical break may be ſeized in a ſingle line, but cannot be carried through a paſſage, as it is in many parts of the Paradiſe Loſt.

In one reſpect however unrimed verſe requires more caution in the diſpoſition of the pauſe. In rimed verſe the rime marks the end of the meaſure, but in blank verſe it is diſtinguiſhed only by the harmony and the pauſe. Now our heroic verſe conſiſting of five accentual feet of the ſame kind, with occaſional varieties only admitted in different parts of the verſe, and without any ſuch fixt circumſtance as the dactyl followed by a ſpondee in the ancient hexameter, to mark the end of the meaſure, if proper attention is not paid to the diſpoſition of the pauſe, the laſt diviſion of one verſe with the firſt diviſion of the following verſe may be miſtaken for one whole verſe, or one whole pentameter with the firſt foot of the next may ſound like an Alexandrin.

drin. Defects of these kinds occur here and there in the Paradise Lost; but it is not difficult to guard against them, particularly by frequently dividing a foot with the pause.*

There is beside the assistance to the emphasis just above-mentioned, another effect derived from the situation of the pause, which may be observed in the following passages:

All night the dreadless angel,—unpursued,
Through heaven's wide champain held his way—till Morn,
Waked by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbar'd the gates of light.

P. L. VI.

———God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks where rivers now
Stream,

* I have here for the first time had occasion to use the word *measure* in a different sense from *meter*, and I shall adhere to that distinction. I shall confine the word *meter* to its classical sense explained from Quintilian in the second section of these observations. The word *measure* I shall use to imply a particular form of versification, a sense frequently assigned to it, as a lyric measure, an elegiac measure, the Alexandrine measure.

Stream,—and perpetual draw their humid train.

P. L. VII. 306

The biſhop of Briſtol obſerves of this laſt line with Mr Richardſon, that "you cannot read it otherwiſe than ſlowly, and ſo as to give your mind a picture of the thing deſcribed. Many examples of the like kind are to be found in our author and all good poets." This is not the firſt occaſion upon which I have had the ſatisfaction to find my ſyſtem regularly account for effects of which others have confeſſed themſelves ſenſible without being able to explain their cauſes. It could hardly however have eſcaped the learned biſhop, though he has omitted the mention of it, that the pauſe, by aſſigning ſo large a portion of the verſe to thoſe members of the ſentence where heaven's wide champain, and the perpetual flow of the rivers are mentioned, very much helps the idea of the vaſt tract of country through which theſe flow, and of the immenſe length of the angel's courſe. But Milton has not left the expreſſion to the pauſe alone: he has made the lines of a really unuſual length:

Thro'

Thrō' Héaven's|wī'de chā'm|pāin hē'ld|hīs wā'y|tīll mō'rn.
Streā'm, ānd|pērpĕ'tŭ|āl drā'w|theīr hūmīd trā'in.

Allowing two times to a long ſyllable, and one to a ſhort one, theſe lines have at leaſt twenty times each; a circumſtance not common in the epic pentameter, and of itſelf ſufficient to make the movement neceſſarily ſlow; as may be obſerved in the following lines;

Harmony divine
Sō' ſmoō'thes | hēr chā'r|mīng tō'nes| —thāt Gō'd's ō'wn ēār
Liſtens delighted.

P. L. V. 627.

——— He on his ſide
Leā'nīng|hā'lf-rā'is'd,|--wīth|loō'ks óf cō'r|dīal lō've
Hung over her enamor'd.

P. L. V. 13.

But that it has not equal power as when aſſiſted by the ſituation of the pauſe, may be ſeen by comparing theſe with the foregoing lines, and that the pauſe alone is quite inadequate to the effect may be obſerved in this next following:

Mild

Mĭ'ld,--ās | whēn Zĕ'|phўrŭ's | ōn Flō'|ră brē'athes.
P. L. V. 16.

The only eſſential of verſification remaining to be conſidered is the *ceſure*. This term has been uſed by the old grammarians in different ſenſes. I mean it to imply the running of words into each other, ſo that every word may not make a complete foot. Dr Foſter declares ſuch ceſure to be no way neceſſary to the harmony of Engliſh verſe, and in ſupport of that opinion produces the following line, which he ſays is perfect without it:

Heroes, repel attacks, command ſucceſs.

I doubt not however but there are thoſe of quicker perceptions to whom the want of ceſure even in this line will be diſagreeable. But in a ſingle line many circumſtances may concur to make a general fault leſs glaring. The accentuation of the firſt foot is here well adapted to that purpoſe. The Latin line given by Dr Foſter as an inſtance of the ill effect of want of ceſure, has no ſuch advantage:

Tăli | cóncidit | ímpiger | íctus | vûlnere | Caéſar.

But

But the Engliſh line has a farther advantage from the variety of its meter:

Hē′rōes | rĕpĕ′l ăttā′cks, |—cŏmmā′nd | ſūccē′ſs.

And I queſtion whether an Engliſh pentameter, conſiſting wholly of iambics accented on the ſecond ſyllable, and unaſſiſted either by ceſure or pauſe, would be leſs diſagreeable than the Latin line.

Mr Pope has in his eſſay on criticiſm, very juſtly, and apparently with ſufficient caution, cenſured the overfrequent and improper uſe of monoſyllables; but he has done it, according to his uſual manner, in terms of ſuch ſtrong ridicule, that ſucceeding poets ſeem to have dreaded even ſuch a moderate uſe of monoſyllables as, from the nature of our language, it is hardly poſſible to avoid. The ſhaft indeed ſeems to have been too univerſally conſidered as being aimed at monoſyllables in general, and even at our language as containing ſo large a proportion of them. An elegant critic has at length undertaken their cauſe, and ſet it in a very favorable light. After giving many inſtances of a power of expreſſion in monoſyllables, which poſyllabic

words cannot equal, he adds, " It is ſaid that " monoſyllables are fit to deſcribe a ſlow and " heavy motion, and may be happily employed " to expreſs languor and melancholy. What in- " ference are we to draw from hence ſhould it " appear that monoſyllables may be full as hap- " pily employed on the oppoſite motions and af- " fections?

" No; fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole.

" Ah! come not, write not, think not once of me.

" Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be preſt;
" Give all thou canſt, and let me dream the reſt."

Webb on Poetry and Muſic.

Pope has been ſuppoſed to condemn monoſyllabic lines without reſerve; yet here are examples of them from Pope inconteſtibly good. He ſtigmatizes them as heavy, dull and mean: yet theſe examples are forcible, lively, and elegant: it will not be difficult to reconcile this difference.

Eraſmus compares the declamation of the Engliſh minſtrels in his time to the barking of dogs, and gives for the reaſon of the ſimilitude that their language was moſtly monoſyllabic.

How

Now in a monoſyllabic language the repetition of the ſtrong accent will neceſſarily be very frequent, and this will undoubtedly give it ſome reſemblance to the monotonous barking of a dog. Pope's line,

And tén lów wórds óft créep in óne dúll líne,

has no leſs than eight ſtrong accents. But, as we have obſerved formerly, monoſyllables are often unaccented, and diſſyllables frequently receive only the weak accent, and unite as intimately with the foregoing or following word as if really a part of it. Where this is the caſe a a monoſyllabic line may be ſpritely in its motion, powerful in its expreſſion, have all the advantage of the ceſure, and be perfectly muſical. The lines then above quoted, divided according to the ceſures will ſtand thus:

No;--fly | me,--fly | me,--far | as pole |--from pole
Ah!--come | not,--write | not--think | not--once |--
of me.

Pant on |--thy lip, |--and--to | thy heart |--be preſt;
Give--all |--thou canſt, |--and let | me--dream |--the reſt.

And it will be obſerved that almoſt every ſtrong

accent

accent is emphatical; a circumſtance which adds no ſmall livelineſs, vigor, and variety to theſe lines.

I will conclude this ſection with analyſing two more paſſages of the Paradiſe Loſt. The addreſs of Eve to Adam in the fourth Book in equally known for the peculiar ſweetneſs of the verſification as for its other extraordinary beauties:

Swēēt ī's | thĕ breă'th | ōf mō'rn, |—hēr rī'|sīng ſwēēt
Wīth chā'rm | ŏf eā'rlĭ|ēſt bī'rds; |—pleă'sānt | thĕ ſún
Whēn fī'rſt- | -ōn thī's | dĕlī'ghtfūl lā'nd- | -he ſprē'ads
His ō'r|iēnt beā'ms, |--ŏn hē'rb|-trēē, frū'it | ānd flŏ'wĕr
Glī'ſtrīng | wīth dē'w; |—frā'grānt | thĕ fē'r|tĭl éārth
Ā'ftēr | ſō'ft ſhówers; -| -ānd ſwēēt | thĕ cŏ'm|ĭng ō'n
Ōf grā'te|fŭl ē've|nīng mī'ld; |—thēn sī|lēnt nī'ght,
Wīth thī's | hēr ſŏ'|lēmn bī'rd, |--ānd thī's | fā'ir mō'on,
Ānd thē'ſe | --thĕ gē'ms | ŏf héăvĕn | --hēr ſtă'r|rў trā'in.
Būt nē'i|thēr brĕ'ath | ōf mō'rn | —whē'n ſhĕ | ăſcēnds
Wīth chā'rm | ŏf éārlĭ|ēſt bī'rds, | ---nōr rī'ſīng ſún
Ōn thī's | dĕlī'ght|fūl lā'nd; | --nŏr hē'rb, | frū'it, flŏ'wer
Glī'ſtrīng | wīth dē'w; | --nōr frā'|grānce āf|tēr ſhówers;
Nōr grā'te|fŭl ēver|ing mī'ld; | —nōr sī'|lēnt nī'ght
Wī'th thī's | hēr ſō'|lēmn bī'rd; | --nōr wā'lk | bў mō'on,
Ōr glĭ'ttĕrīng ſtā'r|lī'ght—wīth|ō'ut thēe | īs ſwē'et.

As

As a beautiful face is generally but an aſſemblage of the moſt common features juſtly proportioned to each other, and diſpoſed in perfect order; ſo this beautiful piece of verſification has nothing peculiar to itſelf but the graces ariſing from the order and proportion of its parts. The reader will therefore upon firſt view of the diſtribution of the tones, times, pauſes, and ceſures, prevent me in any obſervations that might be made upon it.

The following is of another kind:

At ō′nce | thĕ fō′ur-|-ſprĕad ō′ut | thēir ſtă′rrў wī′ngs
Wīth drē′ad|fūl ſhā′de | cōntĭ′gŭ|oŭs,--ā`nd | thĕ ō′rbs
Ŏ′f hīs | fiē′rce chárĭōt rō′ll'd,-|-ā`s wĭth | thĕ ſoū′nd
Ōf tŏ′r|rēnt floō′ds, |—ŏ`r ŏf | ă nū′|mĕroŭs hō′ſt. 830
Hê ŏn | hĭs ī′m|piōus fóēs-|-rī`ght ō′n|wārd drō′ve
Glō′omў | ās nī′ght :|—ū′ndĕr | hīs bū′r|nīng whē′els
Thĕ ſtē′d|fāſt ē`m|pўrē′|ān —ſhō′ok | throŭghoū′t,
Ă′ll būt | thĕ thrō′ne | ītſe′lf | ōf Gō′d. |—Fū′ll ſō′on
Ămō′ng | thĕm hĕ` | ărrī′ved, | ĭ`n hīs | rī′ght hā′nd
Grā′ſpīng | tēn thōúsānd thū′n|dērs, whĭ′ch | hĕ sē′nt
Bĕfō′re | hīm,--ſŭ′ch | ăs ĭ`n |theīr ſō′uls| īnfī′x'd 837
Plā′gues ;—thĕ′y | āſtŏ′n|īſh'd āll | rĕsī′s|tānce lō′ſt,
Ă′ll cŏ′u|rāge ;—dō′wn | thēir ī′|dle wē′a|pōns drō′p;

O'er

O'ĕr ſhiē'lds,|ānd hē'lms,-|-ānd hē'l|med hēāds|hĕ rō'de
Of thrō'nes,|—ānd mī'gh|tў sĕ'răphī`m|—prōſtrā'te,
Thāt wī'ſh'd|thĕ mō'un|taīns--nō'w|mīght bè`ăgā'in
Thrōwn ō'n|thĕm---ă`s|ă ſhē'l|tĕr frŏ`m|hĭs ī're.
Nōr lĕ'ſs|ŏn ē'i|thĕr sī'de|---tēmpē's|tŭoūs fē'll
Hĭs ă'r|rōws--frŏ`m|thĕ foū'r|fōld vĭ'|ſāged foū'r 845
Dīſtī'nct|with ē'yes,|-ā`nd frōm|thĕ lĭ'vīng wheē'ls
Dīſtī'nct|ălī'ke|wīth mū'l|tĭtū`de|ŏf eў'es:
O'ne ſpĭ'|rĭt ī`n|thēm rū'led,|---ānd ĕ've|rў eў'e
Glā'red li'ght|nĭng,--ā`nd|ſhō't fō'rth|pērni|cioūs fíre
Ămō'ng|th'ăccū'rſt,|-thāt wĭ'|thēr'd ā'll|theīr ſtrē'ngth,
Ànd ōf|their wō'n|ted vĭ'|gōr--lē'ft|thēm dráīn'd, 851
Ēxhā'us|tēd,--ſpĭ'|rītlè`ſs,|--āfflī'c|tēd, fā'llen.
Yēt hā'lf|hīs ſtre'ngth|hĕ pū't nōt fō'rth-|-būt chē'ck'd
Hīs thū'n|dĕr ī`n|mī`d vŏ'|lў;---fŏ`r|hĕ mēánt
Nō't tŏ|deſtrō'y,-|-būt róōt|thĕm oū't|ŏf Héăven:
Thĕ ō`|vērthrō'wn|hĕ rā'is'd,|--ānd ăs|ă hē'rd 856
Ōf goā'ts,-|--ŏr tĭ'mŏrōùs flō'ck|tŏgè'|thēr thrōng'd,
Drō've thēm|bĕfō're|hīm thū'n|dērſtrū`ck,-|-pūrſūed
Wīth tē'r|rōrs ā`nd|wīth fū'|rīes,---tŏ`|thĕ boū'nds
Ānd crў's|tāl wā'll|of hē'aven,-|-whĭch, ō'pe|nīng wī'de
Rō'll'd ī'n|wārd,--ànd|ă ſpā'|ciōus gā'p|dīſclō'ſed 861
Ī`ntŏ|thĕ wā'ſte|fūl dēēp;-|-thĕ mō'n|ſtroūs sī'ght
Strū'ck thēm|with hŏ'r|rōr bā'ck|wārd; būt|fa'r wō'rſe
Ŭ'rg'd thēm bĕhī'nd:-|--héādlōng|thēmsē'lves|they

thrō'w

Down

Dō′wn frōm | thĕ vérge | ŏf héăvĕn; | --ĕtē′r | nāl wrā′th
Bū′rnt ā′f | tēr thē`m- | -- tŏ` thĕ | bŏ′ttōm | lēſs pít. 866

The moſt remarkable circumſtance in this paſſage is the variety in the ſituation of the pauſe. In the former, where only the moſt beautiful images are deſcribed, and the moſt tender ſentiment expreſſed, the pauſe always occurs in thoſe ſituations in which it makes the flow of the verſe moſt eaſy and muſical; that is, at the end of the ſecond foot, or at the middle or end of the third; and the only line which has it not in this ſituation is equally divided by two pauſes. But here, where every circumſtance is in the higheſt degree tremendous, the pauſe is continually ſhifted to either extremity of the verſes, and the whole paſſage has a broken, or rather, to borrow a metaphor from a ſiſter art, a craggy form, wonderfully ſuited to the occaſion.

The expreſſion of the 829 line is much heightened by the extreme weakneſs of the accent in the firſt foot, followed by a duplication of the ſtrong accent in the ſecond. The weakneſs of the accent in the fourth foot is alſo efficacious, by leaving the ear vacant for the impreſſion of the more emphatical words. The *th* of *with*, being

is

followed by the ſame letters, may, as the word is intirely unaccented, be left unnoticed by the voice, which is common in ſuch circumſtances in colloquial pronunciation. The ſyllable will then be ſhort, which ſeems moſt advantageous to the expreſſion.

In the 831 line the word *he*, having emphaſis, is long, tho followed by a vowel. In the 836 and 840 the ſame word is ſhort, tho followed by a conſonant.

The effect of the 852 line is great, and its cauſes obvious: three pauſes, and the redundant ſyllable, which is peculiarly adapted to the expreſſion of dejection and languor as well as of the ſofter paſſions.

The 854 line deſerves notice. There is a pyrrhic in the fourth place, preceded by a trochee, and followed by an iambic. Such a concurrence of ſhort ſyllables in the latter half of a line will generally cauſe great weakneſs. The effect is however here remarkably good: the rapidity of the flow is checked by the pauſe artfully introduced in the very midſt of the unaccented ſyllables. This prevents their overfrequency hurting

hurting the ear; and the ſame rapidity recommencing on the ceſſation of the pauſe, the line has altogether uncommon ſpirit.

'The uncommon form of the 86ſ line,' ſays the biſhop of Briſtol,' is admirably contrived to expreſs the idea.' It may be ſo, but I muſt ſay that it is to my ear not an Engliſh heroic verſe.

SECT.

SECT. X.

WE have, in the foregoing ſections, taken I hope a pretty clear view of the efficients of poetical harmony in the Engliſh language, and of their effects in that form of verſe particularly, which is of moſt general uſe. It may now be neither unamuſing nor uſeleſs to take a retroſpect of what Engliſh verſification has been, as far backward as we can trace it, which will perhaps throw a wider light on the general ſubject of this eſſay than might at firſt be expected.

The Angloſaxon poets, as well as all others of Teutonic race, generally uſed meaſures without rime, but frequently introduced alliteration as an ornament to ſet their poems at a wider diſtance from proſe. Dr. Percy, in his eſſay on the meter of Pierce Plowman's viſions, inſerted in his collection of ancient ſongs, obſerves that "this alliteration conſiſted in a certain artful repetition of the ſounds in the middle of the verſes, adjuſted to certain rules of their proſody, one of which was, that every diſtic ſhould have at leaſt three words beginning with the

"ſame

"ſame letter or ſound." "I know not," he adds, "that there is anywhere extant an intire "Saxon poem all in this meaſure, but diſtics "of this ſort perpetually occur in all their poems "of any length.

"Now if we examine the verſification of "Pierce Plowman's viſions, we ſhall find it "conſtructed exactly by theſe rules, ſo that the "author of this poem will not be found to have "invented any new mode of verſification, as "ſome have ſuppoſed, but only to have retain-"ed that of the old Saxon and Gothic poets." He traces this verſification to the beginning of the 16th century, and gives a paſſage from a poem, the laſt, he ſuppoſes, ever written in it, which contains a narrative of the battle of Flodden, fought in 1513. In the ſeveral examples of this poetry which have fallen in my way, the flow of the cadence appears in ſome lines more, in others leſs perfect, but the cadence itſelf everywhere diſcernible, and everywhere the ſame. The following is a paſſage which Dr. Percy gives from a MS. poem intitled *Death and Life:*

Shĕ wās brī′ghtĕr ŏf hēr blē′e,
thēn wā′s thĕ brīght ſónn;

Hĕr rūdd rĕ′ddĕr thān thĕ rō′ſe
Thăt ō′n thĕ rīſe hă′ngeth;
Mēekelў ſmī′līng wĭth hĕr móuth
Ānd mĕ′rrў ĭn hĕr lōoks;
Ĕvĕr laū′ghīng fōr lō′ve,
Ās ſhē′ līke wō′uld.
And ās ſhĕ cā′me bў thĕ bā′nkes,
Thĕ bōúghes ēche óne
Thēy loū′tēd tŏ thāt lā′dy
Ānd lā′id fōrth thēir brā′nches;
Blŏ′ſſōmes ānd bū′rgens
Brē′athēd fūll ſwē′et;
Flowers floŭ′rĭſhĕd īn thĕ frĭth
Whēre ſhē′ fōrth ſtĕ′pped,
Ānd thĕ grā′ſs thāt wās grā′y
Grē′enēd bĕlī′ve.

The only obſervation which Dr. Percy makes on the conſtruction of this verſification is, that it "has a ſort of harmony of its own, proceeding "not ſo much from its alliteration, as from the "artful diſpoſal of its cadence, and the contri-"vance of its pauſe, ſo that when the ear is a "little accumſtomed to it, it is by no means "unpleaſing." The rhythmus is manifeſtly accentual, and of the ſame kind with that of the old verſion of the 104 pſalm, but the number

of

of ſyllables more irregular. Each verſe conſiſts of two half-verſes, and each half-verſe contains two accentual feet. The half-verſes were ſometimes written each in a ſeparate line, as in the foregoing inſtance, ſometimes together, as one whole line. Each accentual foot requires of courſe one accented ſyllable, and this verſification like our modern, often admits accents on ſyllables where the rhythmus does not require them. Theſe ſuperfluous accents I have not marked. The pauſe is regularly at the end of every half-verſe.

If Dr. Percy is right in his opinion that this verſification is the very ſame with that of the Gothic poets in general, and the Angloſaxon in particular, we have great encouragement to carry our inquiries higher: but we will proceed by degrees.

Mr. Johnſon has inſerted in the hiſtory of the Engliſh language prefixed to his dictionary, two poems as ſpecimens of Saxon poetry, and a third written at a time when our language was properly neither Saxon nor Engliſh, but ſomething between both. The two others partake alſo of this mixt nature and are not of that old Saxon kind

to

to which Dr Percy alludes. They are all in rime, and not only their rhythmus is perfectly diſtinguiſhable, but, as Mr. Johnſon obſerves, "they contain apparently the rudiments of our "preſent lyric meaſures, and the writers may "be juſtly conſidered as the genuine anceſtors of "the Engliſh poets." Short extracts will ſerve for examples, Mr Johnſon's work being in every body's hands, and theſe I ſhall give in modern characters:

Fúr in ſée, by wéſt Spáygne
Is a lónd ihóte Cokáygne.
Ther nís lond únder hévenríche
Of wél of gódnis hít ilíche.
Tho páradís be míri and bríyt,
Cokáygn ís of fáirir síyt.
Whát is thér in páradís
Bot gráſſe, and flúre, and grénerís?
Tho thér be jói and grét dúte,
Thér nis mét bóte frúte.
Thér nis hálle, búre, no bénch
Bot wátir mán is thúrſto quénch.

Mr. Johnſon ſuppoſes the date of this pooem to be about the middle of the 12th century. The meaſure is the very ſame with that of Milton's Alle-

Allegro e il Penſeroſo, beginning indifferently with a complete foot, or a ſingle accented ſyllable; only that here the farther licence is taken of ſometimes dropping an unaccented ſyllable in the middle of a verſe. The ſame liberties are taken in the more ancient poem of which the following is an extract, which is otherwiſe almoſt a perfect example of the moſt common of our modern lyric meaſures.

Hévene and érthe he óverſiéth;
His éghen bíth fulbríht:
Súnne and móne and álle ſtérren
Bieth diéſtre ón his líhte.

He wót hwat théncheth, ánd hwat dóth
A'lle quíke wíhte.
Nis no lóuerd ſwích is Chríſt
Ne nó king ſwích is dríhte.

Héven and érthe and álle that ís
Bilóken is ón his hónde:
He deth ál that hís wille ís
Oh ſéa and éc on lónde.

Hé is órd albúten órde,
And énde albúten énde:

He

He óne is évre ón eche ſtéde,
Wénde wér thu wénde.

Hé is búven us ánd binéthen,
Bivóren, and éc bihínd.
Se mán that Gódes wílle déth
Hie mái hine aíhwar vínde.

It appears from all our moſt ancient poetry that the accentuation of the Saxon part of our language remains to this day the very ſame that it was 700 years ago; and hence the harmony of theſe lines, however inferior, is as evident as in any work of Pope's. The only difficulty lies in the final *e*, which, by our anceſtors even after Chaucer's time, ſeems to have been ſometimes pronounced like what the French call their feminine *e*, and ſometimes to have been wholly mute, and it was ſometimes omitted in writing as well as in pronunciation. We may however not unreaſonably conclude that where we find the pronunciation of it neceſſary to what the general tenor of the verſification points out to have been the original harmony, there it ſhould be pronounced; where it offends againſt that harmony, there it ſhould be mute.* In both

 theſe

* See the grammar prefixed to Johnſon's dictionary.

theſe examples the number of ſyllables is more regular than in the alliterative poems of Langland, and other much later poets.

If accentuation has ſuffered ſcarcely any change from the date of theſe poems to the preſent day, we may with great reaſon ſuppoſe, that no great alteration had then been made in it from the time of Alfred. I have ſubjoined two extracts from the verſion of Boethius' treatiſe de conſolatione philoſophiæ by that great monarch and moſt extraordinary man. In theſe I have ventured to mark the accents which I ſuppoſe to have determined the rhythmus. It muſt however be remembered that this meaſure, like our modern heroic verſe, might admit a variety in the diſpoſition of the accents, and a duplication of the accent: The nature of the verſification may therefore have been ſuch as I ſuppoſe it, tho I ſhould not have placed all the accents exactly right. My reaſon for marking them is that the reader may ſee at once that theſe lines have even now, with a pronunciation perfectly natural to an Engliſh voice, a flow, which ſufficiently marks them for verſe, and no inharmonious verſe. I have alſo taken ſome liberties with the orthography to make the pronunciation more obvious

vious, and leſs harſh to readers wholly unacquainted with the Saxon language; but they are ſuch as I preſume thoſe who know the irregularities of the Saxon orthography, and the manner in which modern Engliſh words and ſounds have been formed from the Saxon, will allow to be by no means unwarrantable. That thoſe however who have not Alfred's work at hand, may judge for themſelves, I have added the paſſages below in their original characters.

I.

Hwat íc liotha féla	I who poems many
Luſtlicë yeó	Joyfully erſt
Sánc on ſélum,	Sang not ſeldom,
Nú ſhal ſiofígende,	Now ſhall bemoaning,
Wópë yewáged,	Worn with weeping
Wréccea yiómor,	And ſighs of wretchedneſs,
Síngan ſarcwídas	Sing ſorrowful lays.

I.

Þpæt ic lioþa ꝼela.	pope ẏepæʒeð.
luſtlice ʒeo.	pꝛeccea ʒiomoꝛ.
ſanc on ſælum.	ſinʒan ſaꝛcpiðaſ.
nu ſceal ſioꝼiʒenðe.	

II.

Éála thu ſhíppend	O thou creator of
Shírra túngla,	The ſhining ſtars,
Héfones and eórthan!	Heavens and earth!
Thú on heáhſetle	Thou on a throne
Écum rícſaſt:	Eternally reigneſt:
And thú alne hráthë	And thou all rapid
Héfon ymbhweárfeſt:	The heavens in circle moveſt:
Ánd thurh thínë	And thro thine
Háliyë míht,	Holy might,
Túnglu yenédeſt	The ſtars compelleſt
That hí the to hérath.	That they be obedient.
Swýlkë ſeo ſúnne	Like as the ſun
Swártra níhta	Of ſwarthy night
Thióſtro adwéſketh	The darkneſs diſpelleth

II.

Æala ðu ſcippend.	and ðurh þine.
ſcirna tungla.	haliye mihte.
heſoneſ and eorþan.	tunglu ȝenedeſt.
ðu on heahſetle.	ðæt hi ðe to henaþ.
ecum ricſaſt.	ſwylce ſeo ſunne.
and ðu ealne hnæþe.	ſweartna nihta.
heſon ymbhpeanfeſt.	ðioſtro adpærceþ.

Thúrh thinë méht:	Thro thy power;
Blácum leóhtë	So its gloom with refulgence
Beórhtë ſteórran	Glorious of ſtars
Móna yemétyath	The moon tempers
Thúrh thinra meahta ſped.	By thy divinity ſped.

It is ſomewhere obſerved by Mr. Horace Walpole, that the language of our Saxon anceſtors was the moſt barbarous and inharmonious that ever diſgraced the human voice. But Mr. Johnſon informs us in his hiſtory of the Engliſh language, and appeals to fact for the truth of his information, that the Saxon was in king Alfred's time, capable of expreſſing all the ſentiments of a civilized people. In defence of its harmony it is enough to obſerve that a language which can ſupport a verſification without rime, cannot be wholly wanting in that reſpect, rime being the groſſeſt impoſition upon the ear to atone for deficiency of harmony, of which the human voice is capable.

My

þurh ðine meht. mona gemetgaþ.
blacum leohte. þurh þinna meahta ſpeð.
beorhte ſteorran.

My ſmall acquaintaince with the language and works of the Angloſaxon and other Gothic poets, will not admit my carrying this inquiry concerning their verſification farther. I imagine however it may be permitted me upon the proofs already produced to ſuppoſe, that accent was the ruling power of the harmony in all the ancient Teutonic dialects, till thoſe proofs ſhall be invalidated.

Having now then traced our verſification to the fountain head, we may fall down the ſtream at leiſure, and all we can obſerve by the way will contribute to ſtrengthen our hypotheſis.

Among the Gothic nations a military equipment was ſcarcely eſteemed complete, unleſs ſome Scalds attended as eyewitneſſes of the exploits which it was their function to celebrate. We read of kings who would have ſeveral ſcalds attend on their ſteps in the day of battle, that, if themſelves ſhould fall, one at leaſt might ſurvive to immortalize their laſt atchievements. The character of warrior and ſcald were alſo not unfrequently united, ſo that we may be certain the armies which overran the Roman empire were not without their military bards. Theſe would of courſe employ their beſt abilities upon the flattering ſubjects which their conqueſts ſo plentifully

fully afforded them. Not only their works, but the more celebrated compoſitions of the elder ſcalds, which related the heroic actions of their forefathers before they left the gloomy foreſts of the north, would alſo remain in vogue long after their ſettlement in the conquered countries. The fondneſs of theſe barbarians for their own poetry contributed perhaps little leſs to the overthrow of the Roman language and learning than their military proweſs to that of the Roman empire. Many things prevented the language of the victors from becoming general, but their manners, cuſtoms, and laws prevailed univerſally. When therefore new languages aroſe from the mixture of the conquerors with the conquered, the ſtile of poetry of the former would neceſſarily gain the aſcendant, and the Latin poetry falling into neglect, the laws of its proſody would be diſregarded and forgotten. The prevailing ſtile of poetry might very probably affect the language itſelf in its formation; and quantity being made inferior to accent in the ſtructure of verſe, accent would become the ruling power of the general harmony of the language.

The tongues thus formed were perhaps not ſo well adapted to alliteration as the Teutonic dialects.

dialects. The Italians and Provencials took the lead in poetry, whoſe ſpeeches are peculiarly fitted for riming; and rime, which ſeems to have been not unknown to the Gothic ſcalds, became the favorite ornament of verſification.

England ſhared a different fate from the reſt of Europe. The Saxons did not ſubdue, they exterminated the ancient inhabitants. Their deſcendants therefore received their language from them nearly unmixt, and while it remained ſo, their verſification was little liable to innovation. The conſequence of this was, as we have ſeen, that the very meaſure of the ancient Gothic ſcalds was not obſolete here in the 16th century. Rime however became common before our language ceaſed to be Saxon, and for this favor which it now ſo generally found, ſufficient inducements were not wanting. Of theſe we ſhall preſently ſpeak.

An inundation of new forms of verſification quickly followed the introduction of rime as a common ornament in our poetry, diſtinguiſhed partly by various lengths of verſes, and partly by various diſpoſitions of rimes. Gower and Chaucer were however, according to Dr. Percy, the

the firſt who uſed our preſent heroic pentameter. This meaſure was originally Italian, and ſeems to have been firſt recommended to the Spaniſh poets, as well as our own, chiefly by the fame of Petrarc.

Sir John Gower, and his diſciple Geoffrey Chaucer, may be eſteemed the joint fathers of modern Engliſh poetry. They not only were the firſt who uſed that verſe which hath ſince been ſo ſucceſsfully applied to all the nobleſt purpoſes of poetry, but they introduced a new poetical ſtile conformable to that language which about their time was pretty completely formed from the mixture of Saxon and Norman-French. Dr Percy remarks that the Saxon ſtile, which had ſtriking features of its own, and no mean merit, was ſtill retained by thoſe who uſed the ancient Saxon meaſures. The earl of Surrey, who lived at the diſtance of a century and half from Chaucer, is I think the next who merits the title of an improver of Engliſh poetry. That gallant and unfortunate young nobleman ſeems to have poſſeſſed with his greater endowments uncommon excellency of ear. He not only carried verſification to a perfection of which, from the compoſitions of many later poets, one

ſhould

ſhould have judged our language at that time ſcarcely capable, but was the firſt who dared to free our heroic verſe from the ſhackles of rime.

The ſpreading of claſſical learning had not at firſt that general effect in euphonizing our language which might have been expected. A ſpirit of pedantry aroſe, highly prejudicial to true taſte, and this had in James the I's reign, all the authority which the throne could give it. At no period were compoſitions more inharmonious, either in verſe or proſe, produced in our language. Yet the judicious Mr. Hume, in his excellent hiſtory of England, declares himſelf of opinion that the ſpeech of the polite in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, differed very little from that of our days. It was the mere men of letters who affected a cramp and unuſual diction, without taſte ſufficient to give it any grace or harmony. The poetry of Lord Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyat, even ſo early as Henry VIII's reign, and that of Fairfax particularly in James the I's, are ſtrong corroborating proofs of what Mr Hume has advanced concerning the proſe of thoſe times, and ſeem ſo indicate that even the pronunciation of Henry's court, which, as many think, differed from that of our days as much

as

as the diet of the ladies, was really very nearly the ſame. When this is conſidered we ſhall rather wonder that verſification was not carried to greater perfection by the courtly wits of Charles the II's reign, than pay any great tribute of admiration to Waller as the firſt refiner of Engliſh poetry, a title with which he has been often honored. It was reſerved for the unhappy John Dryden, to ſhow the full harmony of our language. Milton's lyric compoſitions are by no means equal in ſweetneſs to thoſe of later poets.

The works of Taſſo and the other Italian poets were the models on which our countrymen at the revival of letters formed their verſification; and they probably choſe theſe the more readily as their verſification differed not from that which Chaucer had before ſo ſucceſsfully borrowed from Petrarc and the more ancient Italians. Among the Italian poets they alſo found examples of unrimed verſe, and theſe our tragic writers followed univerſally. It appears indeed impoſſible for rime to exiſt upon the ſtage of any people whoſe language is capable of a verſification unincumbered with it. But unrimed verſe was little uſed for any other ſpecies of poetry till the full eſtabliſhment of Milton's fame ſome years after his death.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

IT remains at this day undecided whether rime is an ornament or a blot in our verſification; each opinion having many and ſtrenuous advocates. Theſe hold that to be hardly verſe which has not rime, and thoſe look upon rime as a Gothic ornament, unbecoming claſſic compoſitions. The truth ſeems to lie between the two opinions. That rime is not eſſential to our poetry is ſelf-evident; yet it is often a convenience, and ſometimes a beauty: a Gothic beauty if you will, but ſtill a beauty. Notwithſtanding the high merit of Pope's verſion of the Iliad, I venture to pronounce rime very diſadvantageous to heroic verſe; excluding numberleſs beauties, giving none. Let it only be conceived that the ſublime ſoliloquy of Satan in the fourth book of Paradiſe Loſt,

O thou that with ſurpaſſing glory crowned, &c.

or that beautifully tender addreſs of Eve to Adam in the ſame book,

Sweet is the breath of morn, &c.

or even the ſimply majeſtic lines which open the poem, were ſhackled with rime; the very thought ſhocks all poetical ſenſation. Nevertheleſs it muſt be allowed that in Pope's own admirable ſtile of ſatirical and moral poetry, rime has both uſe and beauty. Our elegiac tetraſtic cannot even ſubſiſt without it, and for this, if for nothing elſe, rime deſerves to be eſteemed an elegant ornament in Engliſh poetry.

In lyric poetry alſo rime has its peculiar uſes. The metrical harmony of the ancients admitted, as we have ſeen, three different cadences, and each of theſe admitted ſeveral different feet. With theſe feet many forms of verſe were compoſed, as hexameter, pentameter, iambic, ſapphic, eſſentially differing in their conſtruction. The modern accentual harmony admits but two different cadences; that of our heroic verſe, and that which is often, but very improperly called anapeſtic, in which the regular place of the accent is on every third ſyllable. As theſe have at preſent no certain names, I ſhall take the liberty of affixing that of *even*, or *common cadence* to the firſt, and of *triple cadence* to the ſecond. Neither of theſe has any variety of accentual feet, which can anſwer the various purpoſes of the different metri-

cal

cal feet of the Greek and Latin. Our heroic verſe admits, in greater or leſs degree, all the varieties of which the even cadence is capable: our dramatic verſe admits them all in the greateſt degree conſiſtent with any poetical harmony. But theſe varieties can only, as we have ſeen, be introduced occaſionally, and will not, or at leaſt never yet did ſerve to conſtitute various forms of verſe eſſentially different. The triple cadence admits no variation of the accent; and accentual verſification will not bear a mixture of the two cadences. From theſe two circumſtances, the want of various feet with the ſame cadence, and the inadmiſſibility of the two cadences in the ſame verſe, reſults no ſmall ſhare of the inferiority of accentual to metrical verſification. It is impoſſible to have much variety of meaſure, and it is difficult with the harmony alone to preſerve the boundaries of verſes always ſo diſtinct as they ought to be *. Thus for inſtance, if an Engliſh heroic verſe has the pauſe at the end of the third foot, and the ſenſe runs on to the end of the firſt foot of the next verſe, and there occurs another pauſe, if the laſt ſyllable of that foot be accented

* *Rhythmi* (mere repetitions of the ſame cadence undiverſified by meters) *neque finem habent certum, nec ullam in contextu varietatem.* Quinctil. Inſt. or. IX. 4.

accented, the whole will form one complete Alexandrine verſe. Again, if the pauſe be at the end of the ſecond foot of two conſecutive lines, the latter having the laſt ſyllable of its ſecond foot accented, from the end of the ſecond foot of the one, to the end of the ſecond foot of the other, will be one complete pentameter verſe. In our heroic verſe indeed the miſchief is eaſily guarded againſt; but it is otherwiſe in lyric, where variety of meaſures is wanted; and here is the great advantage of rime. Beſide that it ſuffices alone to throw language out of proſe, it forms a full boundary for verſes; ſuch a boundary as forces itſelf upon the notice of the dulleſt ear, and gives opportunity for great variety in the texture of odes, even in ſuch a language as the French, which cannot ſupport any meaſure without rime *.

But

* The reaſon why poetry cannot exiſt in the French language without rime, ſeems to appear in the following paſſage of a work lately publiſhed: 'J'ai conſulté, au de-'faut des livres, quantité de perſonnes, qui tiennent, ſoit de 'la réflection, ſoit de l'uſage, tout ce qu'il faut pour bien par-'ler. Or ils ſont tous convenus que nôtre langue ne con-'noit point l'accent proſodique, et que la même ſyllabe 'qu'on éléve dans une phraſe pouvoit être baiſſée dans une 'autre. Auſſi eſt ce une ancienne maxime *Que pour bien 'parler François il ne faut point avoir d'accent.*' Syno-

nymes

But with all the advantage that rime can give, none of our common lyric meaſures ſeem fit for the higher ſtile of ode. Horace's dialogue with Lydia may be well tranſlated in them, but they are very unequal to the ſublimer flights of that poet. Indeed if they run to any length on any ſubject they tire by a ſtiffneſs of movement, a flatneſs of expreſſion, and an incumbrance of rime. Our poets therefore who have aimed at the ſublime in their odes, have commonly choſen that form which has acquired among us the name of Pindaric. Dryden's Alexander's feaſt, Grey's odes on the progreſs of poetry and on the Welſh bards, and ſome of Maſon's choruſes in Elfrida and Caractacus are admirable compoſitions in this ſtile. Indeed in this form of compoſition rime has peculiar advantages: it creates no neceſſity of completing every ſentence in a diſtic or tetraſtic, and if well managed, inſtead of excluding variety, it makes greater variety than in the accentual verſification can be had without it.

N The

mymes Francoiſes, par l' abbe Olivet. p. 262. Another French author, quoted by Dr. Foſter in the ſecond chapter of his eſſay, even denies the exiſtence of poetry among the moderns, and particularly that of French poetry (of which he was probably beſt qualified to ſpeak) 'for,' ſays he, 'our verſes differ from each other only in the number of 'ſyllables.' *Hiſt. of the Acad.* vol. 12.

The power of leaving the ſenſe incomplete at the end of any line is an advantage which the Italian heroic ſtanza alſo has over couplets, and ſufficient to juſtify the choice of thoſe poets who have uſed it. But Milton, notwithſtanding his partiality to the Italian poets, appears to have had a general diſinclination to all ſtanzas. They are only to be found in his earlier and more trifling compoſitions even in the elegiac and lyric ſtyle. The elegiac tetraſtic was in uſe before his time, tho it had not the currency which it hath ſince acquired. It was however unfit for his Lycidas: its formality would certainly tire in ſo long a poem. He therefore choſe a looſer ſyſtem of riming, the beſt perhaps that could be choſen for an elegy of that extent. Without the formality it has all the advantage of that ſlow return of rimes which ſeems to be the circumſtance that makes the pentameter tetraſtic ſo peculiarly fit for elegy. Stanzas like the Italian heroic have been lately uſed among us with very good effect in poems which partake ſome more of the lyric and ſome more of the elegiac ſtile, as in the choice of Hercules, in Akenſide's ode to the country gentlemen of England, and many others. But the ſyſtem of Pindaric ſtanzas uſed by Grey and Maſon, tho its effect when happily produced

produced commands all admiration, requires yet ſo mechanical a nicety in the diſpoſition of the ſenſe, as well as of the rimes, that it ſeems too great a cramp upon poetical genius, and one cannot but wiſh that a freer career were open to the ſublime flights of lyric invention.

But we will take a more particular view of the materials which our language affords for lyric verſification.

We have ſeven lyric meaſures of principal uſe; four with the common cadence, and three with the triple. Of the firſt ſort there is the meaſure of three feet; that of three feet preceded by a ſingle accented ſyllable; that of four feet; and the Alexandrin, which, tho ſometimes borrowed for other poetry, ſeems the rightful property of the lyric muſe. The heroic pentameter is alſo of great uſe in the Pindaric ode, in which verſes of two feet only are likewiſe occaſionally introduced. With the triple cadence we have verſes of two feet, of three feet, and of four feet. Theſe have often the ſame number of ſyllables with verſes of the common cadence, ſo that to ſpeak of our lyric meaſures intelligibly, it is abſolutely neceſ-

ſary

ſary to diſtinguiſh them by ſome other criterion than the number of ſyllables. If we would beſtow upon them any of the names by which the meaſures of the ancients were diſtinguiſhed, thoſe of *bimeter*, *trimeter*, *tetrameter*, &c. ſeem moſt proper; and if to theſe we add the epithets even, or common, and triple, we ſhall have diſtinguiſhing names for all except that of three feet preceded by a ſingle accented ſyllable. This ſyllable being an incomplete or truncated rhythmus, may for convenience-ſake be called *colorlythmus*, and the meaſure from it the colorhythmical meaſure, or colorhythmical tetrameter. If more homely appellatious pleaſe better, thoſe of *threefooted*, *fourfooted*, &c. may be uſed.

Among all theſe meaſures the colorhythmic alone has what can make it eſſentially different from others of the ſame cadence, the reſt as we have already obſerved being mere repetitions of the fundamental cadence in greater or leſs number. But all of them may receive the addition of the hyperrhythmical unaccented ſyllable, and thus become what the ancients called hypercatalectic verſes. This makes in each a fundamental variety. A ſeries of almoſt any of our verſes without hy-

hyperrhythmical ſyllables except the colorhythmic, may be divided into any other kind of the ſame cadence, admitting the liberty uſed by the ancients of occaſionally dividing a word between two verſes. If they have not rime, their ſpecies, that is the number of feet of which each is compoſed, is determined only by the pauſes. But hypercatalectic verſes have not the ſame defect. The hyperrhythmical ſyllable, without rime, and with whatſoever diſpoſition of the pauſes, always ſufficiently marks the boundaries. Two hypercatalectic trimeters cannot paſs for an Alexandrine, nor can any ſeries of any hypercatalectic verſes be divided into verſes of any other kind whatſoever. The verſes of the Italians, from the general tenor of the harmony of their language, moſt naturally take the hypercatalectic form, and hence they have perhaps their greateſt advantage over our poets.

As the accentuation of the moderns reſembles the meter of the ancients in its importance to verſification, ſo it does alſo in its various application to the different purpoſes of poetry. The rules for the diſpoſition of long and ſhort ſyllables in the heroic verſe of the ancients are few

and

and ſimple; and ſo are thoſe for the diſpoſition of accents in Engliſh heroic verſe. Latin and Greek iambics admit greater variety of feet: Engliſh dramatic verſe differs, as we have obſerved, from the heroic, only in allowing greater licence in the diſpoſition of the accents, and in the introduction of redundant unaccented ſyllables. In the lyric poetry of the ancients the particular ſituations of particular feet were more ſtrictly ſettled, and ſo is the ſituation of the accent in our own lyric verſe. The colorhythmic has the accents immutably fixt. The common trimeter and tetrameter admit the firſt variation, but ſparingly: the latter however oftener than the former. Other variations are ſeldom uſed in lyric poetry tho the hudibraſtic ſtile admits them. Doubled accentuation muſt be introduced in lyric verſe with much caution. The Alexandrin having its pauſe invariably at the end of the third foot is a kind of double verſe, compoſed of two trimeters, either of which may have the firſt variation. The triple meaſures admit no variation. Two accents are often admitted in the ſame foot, but the rhythmical accents never change their place.

The

The great uſe which the Italians have made of their heroic verſe in lyric poetry, ſeems to indicate that even they have felt the deficiency of their accentual harmony. Yet it muſt be allowed that they have advantages which we want, and theſe not merely derived from the ſuperior ſweetneſs of their language. The mere variety ariſing from the unaccented hyperrythmical ſyllable, with which their verſes moſtly conclude, is often a very great one. We have no ſtanza, compoſed wholly of ſhort lines, equal to that common one of the Italians,

Grazie a gl'inganni tuoi,
Alfin reſpiro o Nice:
Alfin d'un infelice
Ebber gli dei pietà.

An Engliſh ſtanza formed on this model, would probably not equal the grace of the Italian, but with the precaution never to have the hyperrythmical ſyllable long, ſomething of the kind might be worth trying. Whether any thing advantageous might be drawn from Metaſtaſio's celebrated hymn to Venus, ſweet and ſounding as the meaſure is in the Italian, I will not

not undertake to aſſert; but there is one circumſtance which would induce one to ſuppoſe there may, and that is that the common meaſure of our Saxon anceſtors bears a reſemblance to it, which, however rough, is yet a ſtrong one. In all ſuch attempts the genius of the language muſt be well conſidered; for if the Italian has harmonical graces which the Engliſh cannot reach, the Engliſh is yet perhaps not without ſome which even the Italian wants.

I know not whether the colorythnic is peculiar to our poetry, but I never met with it in any other language. It is the moſt ſpirited of our lyric meaſures, and the beſt adapted to the ſublime. Maſon has accordingly made great uſe of it in the choruſes of Caractacus; Gray has an ode intirely in this meaſure, and has alſo choſen it for that nobly animated opening of his ode on the Welſh bards,

Rŭ′|īn ſēize | thēe, rū′th|lēſs kíng.

The ſame merit probably induced Milton to admit it among common tetrameters in thoſe beautiful poems the Allegro and Penſeroſo, the beſt examples perhaps exiſting in our language for the

the ſimpler form of longer odes. In ſhorter poems the alternate fourfooted and threefooted verſes pleaſe more generally than any other. Barretti ſays of that ſtanza in the grammar prefixed to his dictionary, that it is *di molto piacevol ſuono*, of a very pleaſing ſound, and the teſtimony of a foreigner and an Italian will probably be eſteemed weighty on ſuch an occaſion *. He ſpeaks

* I think we may allow weight to Mr. Barretti's commendation, tho we might refuſe it to his cenſure, becauſe he appears very inadequately acquainted with the harmony of our language, and the nature of our verſification. I will mention one paſſage of his Engliſh proſody not for the ſake of finding fault, but becauſe it tends to prove the near conformity of Engliſh to Italian verſification, and conſequently the near reſemblance of the general harmony of the two languages. He gives theſe lines from Rowe's tragedy of the Fair Penitent, with the accents thus marked, and the following obſervation upon them:

Let thís auſpícious dáy be éver ſácred,
No moúrning, nó misfórtunes háppen ón it;
Let ít be márk'd for triumphs ánd rejoícings;
Let háppy lóvers éver máke it hóly,
Chuſe ít to bléſs their hópes, and crówn their wíshes,
This háppy dáy that gíves me my Caliſta.

'Queſti endecaſyllabi hanno lo ſteſſo ſuono che i noſtri 'quando ſuono de' più perfetti: biſogna però oſſervare che 'un delicato orecchio Italiano non ſoffrirebbe volentieri quel 'regolatiſſimo

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ſpeaks of it indeed as uſed for ſhort compoſitions, and we may add that it is equally unfit for ſublime as for extenſive ſubjects.

We have inſtances of verſes of two common feet with the colorhythmus prefixed, and Pope has introduced, in his ode on St. Cæcilia, verſes of one foot only with the colorhythmus prefixed. Theſe may poſſibly be occaſionally advantageous for particular expreſſion, but their uſe cannot be very extenſive in any compoſition but ſuch as that of the Lilliputian bard upon the Manmountain,

The

'regolatiſſimo cadere d' ogni accento ſur ogni ſeconda ſilla-
'ba di ſei verſi conſecutivi, ed un delicato orecchio Ingleſe
'non potrebbe patire il contrario, ed hanno entrambi ra-
'gione, ſeguendo ciaſcuno la natura della ſua favella.' *Theſe verſes have the ſame ſound with ours when moſt perfect. We muſt however obſerve that a delicate Italian ear will not willingly ſuffer this unvaried accentuation upon alternate ſyllables for ſix lines together; and a delicate Engliſh ear could not bear the contrary. Both are right, following the nature of their reſpective languages.* Now a good Engliſh ear will be little better pleaſed with ſuch monotonous numbers than the moſt delicate Italian, nor are they to be found in thoſe verſes. The Engliſh reader will obſerve that the third line and the fifth ought each to have the accent on the firſt ſyllable inſtead of the ſecond. Mr. Barretti has equally miſtaken the accentuation in almoſt every other piece of Engliſh poetry in which he has marked it.

The triple meaſures are chiefly uſed for either ludicrous or paſtoral ſubjects. It ſeems very extraordinary that they ſhould be equally and peculiarly ſuited to the expreſſion of riotous mirth, and of ſoft melancholy, but ſo they appear by experience to be. Of the paſtoral kind we have many beautiful examples, and ſome of no mean merit in the ſatirical and ludicrous ſtile. The colorhythmic is not without ſome degree of the ſame peculiarity. Its fitneſs for the ſublime, and for ſpirited expreſſion, the odes abovementioned will teſtify. But it is alſo ſo well adapted to ſubjects of a very different kind as to have been often called the anacreontic meaſure. Some of Anacreon's des, that on the Roſe particularly, have been tranſlated in it very ſucceſsfully, and I will venture to affirm that no other meaſure would have equal effect in the following beautiful little ſonnet of Shakeſpear:

Táke, oh táke thoſe líps awáy,
Thàt ſo ſweétly wère forſwórn,
Ànd thoſe éyes the bréak of dáy,
Lights that dò miſléad the mórn.
Bùt thoſe kíſſes bríng agáin;
Scáls of lóve, but ſeál'd in váin.

The

The triple meaſures are wholly unfit for the ſublime except perhaps on very particular occaſions in the Pindaric Ode. Dryden has ventured upon them in his Alexander's Feaſt, which admirable poem contains examples not only of every meaſure common in our verſification, but almoſt of every combination of meaſures. Pope has alſo uſed triple meaſures in his ode on St. Cæcilia, but not with equal ſucceſs.

The few lyric poems which we have in our language without rime, are ſcarcely ſufficient to prove either the adequacy or the inſufficiency of unrimed meaſures for lyric poetry in our language. Milton's tranſlation of the fifth ode of Horace's firſt book, is truly *ſimplex munditiis*. Every body I believe does not know that there exiſts in our language an elegant Pindaric ode without rime, and thoſe who do not, would probably treat the very idea as chimerical. Such a poem however is to be found in a little collection publiſhed not many years ſince under the title of the Union. As I know not that it is in any of thoſe larger collections which have prevented this little book from becoming very common, I will inſert a ſeries of the ſtanzas.

This

I. 1.

This goodly frame what virtue ſo approves,
And teſtifies the pure etherial ſpirit
As mild Benevolence.
She with her ſiſter Mercy ſtill awaits
Beſide th'eternal throne of Jove,
And meaſures forth with unwithdrawing hand
The bleſſings of the various year,
Sunſhine or ſhower, and chides the madding tempeſt.

I. 2.

With her the heavenbred nymph, meek Charity,
Shall faſhion Onſlow forth in faireſt portrait;
And with recording care
Weave the freſh wreath that flowering Virtue claims.
But oh, what muſe ſhall join the band?
He long has ſojourn'd in the ſacred haunts,
And knows each whiſpring grot and glade
Trod by Apollo and the lightfoot graces.

I. 3.

How then ſhall awkward Gratitude,
And the preſumption of untutor'd duty
Attune my numbers all too rude?
Little he recks the meed of ſuch a ſong.
Yet will I ſtrech aloof;

And

And when I tell of courteſy,
Of well attemper'd zeal,
Of awful Prudence ſoothing fell Contention,
Where ſhall the lineaments agree
But in thee Onſlow? Thou thy wonted leave
Indulge me, nor miſdeem a ſoldier's bold emprize.

I refer to this ode for proof of what may be done in our laguage with unrimed verſe, rather than for example of what ought to be done. It contains however not a little deſerving imitation. The final hyperrhythmical ſyllables in particular, excepting perhaps thoſe which conclude ſtanzas, are judiciouſly introduced; and the boundaries of verſes, all but one in the ſixth ſtanza, are every where ſufficiently marked.

Beſide this Pindaric, and Milton's tranſlation, I have ſeen but two odes in our language without rime. They are both inſerted in Dodſley's collection; the author of one, I believe, the preſent biſhop of St. Aſaph, of the other Mr. William Collins, well known for his many elegant lyric compoſitions. In none of theſe is the colorhythmus introduced. How great uſe may therefore be made of its peculiar advntage for the unrimed ode,

remains

remains yet wholly for future trial. And perhaps that remarkable line in Paradiſe Loſt,

Shoóts in|viſible | virtue | éven to | the deép

may deſerve the conſideration, I do not take upon me to ſay the imitation, of any poet who would try the power of our language in unrimed lyrics.

It is beyond my purpoſe to enter farther into particulars concerning our lyric verſification. But it will probably be expected in a work which profeſſes to treat of the harmony of human ſpeech, that what is proper to proſe compoſitions paſs not intirely unnoticed. A diſquiſition of this ſubject to the extent which its importance might demand, would lead me much beyond my limits; but a few words will ſuffice to ſhow in what manner the principles already deduced from verſe may be applied to proſe.

Of the ancient rhythmi, the even, the double and the ſeſcuple, the ancient writers on rhetoric tell us that the two firſt only were fit for verſification; and the laſt, as forming a mixt and leſs ſtriking harmony, they particulary recommend for rhetorical

rhetorical compoſitions*. Proſe, they ſay, ſhould not be void of cadence, nor ſhould it have ſo regular a cadence as to make art apparent. Therefore tho all the various feet of all the cadences may be admitted in rhetorical compoſitions, yet they ſhould be mixt in ſuch a manner that no one may obtrude itſelf too much to notice. † Theſe rules having their foundation in the nature of human ſpeech, we ſhall probably find ſomething analogous to them proper to be obſerved in Engliſh proſe.

The metrical rhythmi of the ancients were in the the proportions of three, four, and five. ‡ Our

* Ariſt. Rhet. III. 8. Demetr. de eloc. 41, 43.

† Cicero. Quinctil.

‡ When Ariſtotle tells us, in the third book of his treatiſe on rhetoric, that the pæon is in the proportion of three to two, the dactyl in that of one to one, and the iambus in that of two to one, he ſpeaks not of the proportions of the ſeveral rhythmi to each other, but merely of the proportions which the conſtituent parts of each rhythmus bear among themſelves. That the proportions of the rhythmi to each other muſt always have been what I have ſaid, is ſufficiently evident from Quintilian's account of them, and I ſhould not have thought it neceſſary to trouble the reader

Our accentual cadences are in the proportions of two and three. If the reader ſhould incline to think this laſt poſition not ſufficiently evident, I muſt beg him for the preſent to allow me credit for it, and I will endeavour to give him farther ſatisfaction in the ſequel. Theſe two proportions do not admit a third; for any thing farther can be but a duplication or compoſition of the other two. Our materials then for forming a mixt, and as Ariſtotle and Demetrius call it, a hidden harmony, are the even cadence, with its variation, double accentuation, weak accentuation, and unaccented foot; the triple cadence, which properly admits no variety; the colorhythmus; and the hyperrhythmical unaccented ſyllable. The proper uſe of all theſe for proſe compoſitions will be beſt diſcovered by obſerving how they are interwoven in the works of our beſt writers.

'When a góv|ernment floúr|iſhes |in cón|queſt |
'and is |ſecúre |from fór|eign attácks, |it ná|-

urally

reader with this note, but for the numberleſs miſtakes which I have obſerved to have been made concerning the import of the word rhythmus, which gives reaſon to apprehend that any paſſage the leaſt obſcure concerning it in an ancient author may ſtill raiſe new difficulties.

'uràll|y fálls | into áll | the pléa|ſures of lúx|ury :|
'and as théſe | pleáſures | are vé|ry expén|ſive,| they
'pút | thóſe who | are addíc|ted tò | them | upon
'ráis|ing fréſh | ſupplíes | of món|ey, | by áll | the
'méth|ods of | rapá|ciousnèſs | and corrúp|tion ;| ſo
'that áv|aríce |and lúx|ury vér|y óſ|ten becóme|
'óne cóm|plicà|ted prín|ciple | of ác|tion | in thóſe|
'whoſe heárts | are whól|ly ſét | upon eáſe, | mag-
'níf|icènce | and pléa|ſure.'

Spectator. No. 55.

Here is an eaſy flowing period, without any other particular character, as without ſentiments to require it. The even cadence with its common accentuation prevails, chiefly varied by the intermixture of the triple cadence, and the hypercatalectic ſyllable: no colorhythmus and only one foot doubly accented. However difficult it may be to imitate the flowing harmony of Mr. Addiſon's ſtile, the cauſes of that beauty will immediately preſent themſelves upon analyſing in this manner any of his writings. It will be found in all of them nearly of the ſame kind. Where he riſes to the moſt ſublime deſcription,

or

or dwells on the moſt moving circumſtances, amid the higheſt pomp of diction, and the fineſt touches of the pathetic, the ſame eaſy flow is ſtill retained. If he aims at an effect of a more ſtriking kind, it is with judgment, and he never fails of attaining it, but the general characteriſtic of the harmony of his language, as well as of the ſtile, is grace.

We are nót | a lít|tle pleáſed | to fínd | évery | gréen | leáf ſwárm | with míl|lions of án|imals, | thát | at their lár|geſt grówth, | are nót | víſi|ble to | the ná|ked eye. | There is ſóme|thing véry | engá|ging to | the fán|cy as wéll | as to | our ré|ſon ìn | the tréa|tiſes | of mét|als, mín|erals, | pláns, | and mé|teors. | But whén | we ſurvéy | the whóle | éarth | at ónce, | and the sév|eral plan|ets that líe | within | its neígh|borhood, | we are | fílled | with a pléas|ing aſton|iſhment | to ſée | ſo | mány | wórlds háng|ing óne | abóve | anó|ther, | and ſlí|ding round | their áx|les with ſùch | amá|zing pómp | and ſolém|nity. | If áf|ter thís | we contém|plate thoſe wíld | fiélds of | éther | that

reach

réach | in height | as fár | as from Sát|urn to | the fíxt | ſtárs and rùn | abroád | almóſt | to an | infín-|itùde, | our imà|giná|tion fínds | its capá|city fíl-led | with ſo | imménſe | a proſ|pect, | and puts | it-ſélf | upon | the ſtrétch | to còm|prehénd | it. | But if | we yét | ríſe hígh|er, | and consíd|er the fíxt | ſtárs | as ſó | many váſt | óceans | of fláme | that are éach | of them | attén|ded with | a díf|fe-rent ſét | of plán|ets | and ſtíll | diſcó|ver néw | fírma|mènts and | néw líghts | that are ſúnk | fár-ther | in thóſe | unfá|thomà|ble dépths | of é|ther, | ſo as nót | to be ſéen | by the ſtrón|geſt of | our tél|eſcòpes, | we are lóſt | in ſùch | a láb|yrìnth | of ſúns | and wórlds | and confóun|ded wìth | the imménſity and | magní|ficènce | of ná|ture.

Spect. No. 419.

In analyſing a proſe period we are often at liberty to chuſe of two or three methods that which appears moſt natural. This circumſtance is in common to our accentual harmony with the metrical harmony of the ancients. The conſiderations which have determined my choice are chiefly theſe.

The

The even cadence with its common accentuation appears to be that which the general bent of our language prefers for the leading efficient of harmony. For this reaſon it ſeems proper to give that foot a general preference, where a paſſage may equally well be reſolved into feet of that kind or of any other. It appears improper to leave an accented ſyllable as a colorhythmus where a complete foot can be conveniently formed, unleſs emphaſis points out ſuch a diviſion. As poetry, ſays Demetrius Phalereus, is divided by verſes, ſo is proſe by periods and members of periods. On this account it ſeems proper when an unaccented ſyllable concludes a member of a period, to conſider ſuch ſyllable generally as hyperrhythmical, rather than to refer it to the firſt foot of the following member. An unaccented ſyllable cannot I imagine be properly hyperrhythmical in any other ſituation. I have only once ventured to aſſign three ſyllables to a foot of the common cadence. It might have been done in another place or two, I think with ſufficient propriety. I think it may be done with propriety whenever the foot is a metrical dactyl, anapeſt, or tribrachys, accented on the middle ſyllable.

I will not trouble the reader with particular remarks on the analyſis of the foregoing paſſage, becauſe ſuch as it ſuggeſts will I doubt not immedately occur to him. But as I have already taken ſo much upon myſelf it will probably be required of me to go a little farther, and declare what I think faulty in proſaic harmony.

I am always glad of an opportunity to ſhelter my own opinion under better authority, and I ſhall not fail to ſeize what offers when I am to undertake ſo invidious a buſineſs as that of finding fault. The elegant and judicious Mr. Melmoth, in a letter on the defects of Engliſh orators, has quoted the following paſſage from archbiſhop Tillotſon's ſermons, to prove that this celebrated preacher had 'no ſort of notion of rhetorical numbers :'

" One might be apt to think at firſt view, " that this parable was overdone, and wanted " ſomething of a due decorum ; it being hardly " credible, that a man, after he had been ſo mer- " cifully and generouſly dealt withal, as, upon " his humble requeſt, to have ſo huge a debt ſo " freely forgiven, ſhould, while the memory of

" ſo

" ſo much mercy was freſh upon him, even in
" the very next moment, handle his fellow-ſer-
" vant, who had made the ſame humble requeſt
" to him, which he had done to his lord, with
" ſo much roughneſs and cruelty, for ſo incon-
" ſiderable a ſum."

' This whole period (not to mention other ob-
' jections which might juſtly be raiſed againſt it)
' is unmuſical throughout; but the concluding
' members, which ought to have been par-
' ticularly flowing, are moſt miſerably looſe and
' disjointed."

Fitzosborne's Letters. XIV.

I have given this paſſage firſt, as Mr. Melmoth has quoted it, without dividing it by analytical marks, leſt they ſhould ſeem to ſet it in a more unfavorable light than it deſerves. We will now try to find the cauſe of that diſguſt which every reader will doubtleſs receive from it in ſome degree, as well as Mr. Melmoth.

One ^{2}míght | be ^{2}ápt | to ^{2}thínk | at ^{2}fírſt | viéw,
that ^{2}thís | ^{2}pára|ble ^{2}was | ^{2}óver|dóne, | and ^{2}wánt|ed
^{2}ſóme|^{2}thing of | a ^{2}dúe| ^{2}decó|rum; | it ^{2}bé|ing ^{2}hár|dly
créd|ible

^{2}créd|^{2}iblè | tha^{3} a mán | áf^{2}ter | he had^{3} beén | ſo^{2} mer|-
^{2}ciful|ly and^{3} gén|^{2}eroùs|ly dé^{2}alt | with^{2}ál, | as^{3} upón |
his^{2} húm|ble^{3} requéſt, | to^{2} háve | ſo^{2} húge | a^{2} débt |
ſo^{2} fréel|ly^{3} forgí|ven, | ſhoúld^{2}, while | the^{2} mém|^{2}ory |
of^{2} ſó | much^{2} mér|cy^{3} was fréſh | upòn^{2} | him,
| é^{2}ven | in^{3} the vé|^{2}ry néxt | mó^{2}ment, | há^{2}ndle | his^{2}
fél|ow^{2} ſer|vant, | who had^{3} máde | the^{2} ſáme | húm^{2}ble |
requé^{2}ſt | to^{2} hím | which^{2} hé | had^{2} dóne | to his^{3} lórd,
| with^{2} ſó | much^{2} roúgh|neſs and^{3} crú|^{2}elty | for^{2} ſó |
inconsíd^{3}|^{2}erà|ble a^{3} ſúm.

The firſt diſagreeable circumſtances that ſtrike one in this period are a heavineſs, a formality, and a want of fluency in its three firſt members; it appears in the analyſis that the two former of them are heroic verſes wanting only one accented ſyllable, and that the latter is a complete dramatic hypercatalectic verſe. With the following ſlight alterations they are three perfect verſes:

One might be apt to think, at ſudden view,
That this compariſon was overdone,
And wanted ſomething of a due decorum.

Now

Now a ſingle complete verſe, ſcattered here and there, will never offend if its beginning and ending are not too ſtrongly marked by pauſes; but three complete members of a period together approaching ſo nearly to verſe, will always diſpleaſe; and an heroic verſe wanting an unaccented ſyllable, will generally be a diſagreeable member of a proſe period, unleſs ſome of its accents are emphatical. Mr Addiſon's periods and members of periods moſtly end with the unaccented hyperrhythmical ſyllable, and ſcarcely ever with a ſtrong accent, except where emphaſis gives importance to ſuch a concluſion. The graceful flow ſo much admired in his writings, is not a little owing to this circumſtance. His language ſeems always united like water, by the aptitude of its parts to coaleſce, and never wears the appearance of being forcibly held together. Now the next members of the period we are conſidering have the direct contrary quality. I know not how to expreſs my ſentiment of them better than by ſaying that they ſeem as if upon ſhaking they would not flow like a liquid, but tumble in large lumps:—'it bé|ng hárd|ly 'créd|iblè|—that a mán|—áfter he had been ſo 'mercifully and generouſly dealt withál|—as up-'on his humble requéſt'——and the concluding

members

members are of the ſame texture: three together begin with accented ſyllables,——'ſhould while 'the memory of ſo much mercy was freſh upon 'him, |—even in the very next moment, |—handle 'his fellow-ſervant, |'—and the following four, which complete the period, have nearly the ſame abrupt concluſion;—--'who had máde | the 'ſáme | húmble | requéſt | to hím |----which 'hé | had dóne | to his lórd,|'----(no ceſure in theſe two members) 'with ſo much roughneſs 'and cruelty, |----for ſo inconſiderable a ſum.' The ill effect of this disjointed harmony, if harmony it can be called, is not a little heightened by the diſlocation of the language; by the ſituation of the auxiliary *ſhould*, at ſuch an unmerciful diſtance from the verb *handle* to which it belongs, and this again ſo far from that following member of the period with which it is in ſenſe connected. An ungraceful exertion of the voice upon particular parts, is neceſſary to make ſuch disjointed language even intelligible. In the analyſis of the following paſſage the reader will ſee the cauſes of that very different effect perceptible in Mr. Addiſon's writings when he would expreſs himſelf energetically on religious ſubjects.

The mán | who ál|ways líves | in thís | diſpo-ſí|tion of mínd, | has nót | the ſáme | dárk and | mé-lan|choly viéws | of hú|man ná|ture, | as hé | who consíd|ers himſélf | abſtrác|tedly | from thís | re-lá|tion tò | the ſu|préme bé|ing. | At the | ſáme tíme | that he | reflécts | upon | his ówn | weák-neſs | and ìm|perfec|tion, | he cóm|forts him-sèlf | with the còn|templá|tion of thóſe | divíne | át-tri|butes whìch | are emplóyed | for his | ſáfety | and wél|fare. | He fínds | his wánt | of fóre|ſight made úp | bỳ the | omnís|cience of hím | who is hìs | ſup-pórt. | Hè is | nót sén|ſiblè | of his | ówn wánt | of ſtrẹ́ngth | when he knówſ | that his hél|per is | al-míghty. | In ſhórt, | the pér|ſon who hàs | a fírm | trúſt òn | the ſu|préme bé|ing, | is pów|er-fùl | in hìs | pówer, | wíſe by | hìs wis|dom, háp|py by | hìs háp|pineſs. | He réaps | the bén|e-fìt | of éver|y divíne | áttri|bute, and | lóſes | his ówn | inſuffi|ciency | in the fúl|neſs of ín|finìte | per-féc|tion. | Spect. No. 441.

Mr.

Mr. Hume, in his obſervations on the ſtate of learning in England in James the I's reign, mentions it as a remarkable circumſtance, that in all nations where letters have flouriſhed, poetry has been carried to great perfection, before proſe writers have attained to any degree of claſſical merit. As far as this relates to the harmony of the two ſtiles of compoſition, to which Mr. Hume indeed particularly alludes, the reaſon is not difficult to find. It may be illuſtrated by what is obvious in a ſiſter art. Any perſon unuſed to drawing, will much ſooner acquire the ſkill to make a good repreſentation of a fine piece of architecture than of a beautiful tree: and for this reaſon: in the former very great aſſiſtance may be had from rule and compas, of which the unpractiſed may make advantage nearly as well as the moſt experienced: but in the latter a judicious eye, and a ready hand will alone avail; and theſe can only be obtained by aſſiduous pratice and much obſervation. Thus alſo verſe is made by ſtrict rules: whether given by precept, or only by example matters not. But in proſe it is far otherwiſe. We can obſerve that the flow of one period is pleaſing, of another diſguſting, of a third magnificent, of a fourth mean, and from the whole we may draw general, but not

particular

particular rules. We can ſcarcely more give directions for all the different forms of periods which may be introduced in proſe compoſitions, than for all the different forms of trees which a landſkip may exhibit. For this reaſon among others, I ſhall wave all farther remarks, and conclude this ſection with the analyſis of one paſſage more, of a different kind from any of the foregoing. Thoſe who would purſue farther any inquiry on the ſubject, will not find it difficult to apply to the conſideratlon of proſe any part of that knowlege of the harmony of language, which can be at firſt acquired only from verſe. Perhaps alſo, when they have well conſidered both the difference, and the analogy between metrical and accentual harmony, thoſe parts of the works of Demetrius Phalereus, Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, Cicero and Quintilian which relate to the harmony of proſe compoſitions, little as they have been hitherto underſtood, may be conſulted with no ſmall advantage.

The following paſſage is part of the earl of Strafford's ſpeech at his trial, as given by Hume in his hiſtory of England.

Whêre has | thîs ſpé|cies of | guîlt láin | ſo lông
concêaled ? | Whêre has | thîs fîre | beèn ſo | lông
buried

bû|ried, | dúring | ſo mâ|ny cén|turies, | that nô | ſmóke ſhould | appéar | till it | bûrſt oût | at ônce | to conſûme | mê and | my chîl|dren? | Bêt-|ter | it wére | to líve | ùnder | nô lâw | át âll, | and | confórm | ourſélves | the bêſt | we cán | to the âr-|bitr|ry will | of a mâs|ter; | than fân|cy we hàve | a lâw | on wh ích | we càn | relŷ, | and fînd | at | lâſt, | that thîs | lâw ſhall | inflíct | a pûn|iſhmènt | precê|dent tò | the prò|mulgá|tion, | and try | us by máx|ims ûn|heárd of | till the vê|ry mô ment of | the prò|ſecú|tion. | If I sáil | on the Thámes, | and ſplít | my vés|sel òn | an án|chor, | in cáſe | there be nó | buóy to | gíve wár'ning, | the pár-|ty ſhall páy | me dá|mages: | bût if | the án|chor be mâr|ked oút, | thên is | the ſtrí|king òn | it àt | my ôwn | péril. | Whêre is | the mârk | ſet up-|on thîs | crîme? | Whêre is | the tô|ken by which | I ſhoùld | diſcó|ver ìt? | It has láin | con-|cêaled | under wá|ter, | and nô | hûman | prûdence, | nô hú|man în|nocènce | could ſâve | me fròm | the deſtrûc|tion with which | I am | at pré|ſent thréat-|ened.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

WE have obſerved by what means it probably happened that accent came to be the ruling power of harmony in the languages which have been formed from the ruins of the Latin. Meter being no eſſential of verſification, all regard to it began to ceaſe; and learning and good taſte falling throughout weſtern Europe to their very loweſt ebb, all idea of a metrical verſification became totally loſt. The monks, ſole poſſeſſors of the ſcanty relics of literature, often uſed their barbarous accentual rhythmus even when they choſe the Latin tongue for their poetical attempts, and to complete the diſgrace of that noble language, they added rime. When the tide began to turn again and the claſſical Latin poets became once more objects of admiration and delight, their verſification was obſerved to be founded on other laws than what were then in uſe. The means of recovering theſe laws were not wanting; but tho recovered, it by no means appears that they were underſtood. The power even of conceiving a verſification founded on meter ſeems to have been almoſt loſt, with the

the only two languages that, as far as appears, ever poſſeſſed ſuch a verſification.

Dr. Foſter has collected pretty good authorities for ſuppoſing that the Greek language was preſerved in a great degree of purity by the learned of Conſtantinople, even to the final overthrow of the eaſtern empire. The noble manner in which pope Leo X. patronized the Greeks of learning and character who upon that fatal event took refuge in Italy, and the zeal with which he promoted the printing of the invaluable volumes which they brought with them, and the public teaching of their language, in which many of them employed themſelves, are well known. But the perfect pronunciation of a foreign language is not eaſily acquired. The few Conſtantinopolitans, who ingaged in teaching the Greek, and were qualified for the taſk, ſcarcely ſufficed to ſpread its pronunciation with tolerable accuracy among the learned of Italy; and it was not in the nature of things for their inſtructions to be delivered with competent fidelity to ſucceeding generations, or even to thoſe of the ſame age who could not receive it from their own mouths. The knowledge therefore of the true harmony of ancient poetry, did not long ſurvive them;

them; accent and quantity, its two principal efficients, falling into a confuſion not unlike that of two ſtrings intangled and knotted ſo together that the utmoſt pains are requiſite to find their ends, and to diſcover whether they are really two or only one. Almoſt every thing written from that time, on the ſubject either of ancient or modern poetry, has only contributed to make the folds more intricate; till at length Dr Foſter, by his diligent reſearches among all the writings of the ancients, has been enabled ſo accurately to perform the difficult taſk of diſentangling them, that a blind man, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, may feel that they are two things, perfectly diſtinct.

Notwithſtanding this, ſubſequent writers have fallen into the groſſeſt errors concerning the harmony of human ſpeech in general, and of the learned languages in particular. An elegant critic already mentioned, gives the following definition of quantity: 'The quantity of a ſyl-'lable is the time employed, or the force beſtow-'ed on its pronunciation.' From this it ſhould ſeem that ſtrength, or loudneſs of ſound, and length, or protraction of ſound, if they are not one and the ſame thing, produce at leaſt one and

the ſame effect. To ſoften in ſome degree the abſurdity of ſuch a doctrine, Father Kircher's idea is adopted of the reſemblance of the human voice to a bell, which, if its vibrations be not forcibly ſtopt, will undoubtedly ſound the longer, as well as the louder, the harder it is ſtruck. An Engliſh tranſlation of two Greek lines of Anacreon is added in order to ſhow the exact reſemblance between the harmony of the two languages. The Greek lines are theſe:

Θελω λεγειν Ατρειδας,
Θελω δε Καδμον αδειν.

and this the tranſlation,

I fain would praiſe the Atreides,
I fain would ſing of Cadmus.

and the reſemblance conſiſts in that the number of ſyllables is the ſame, and the Engliſh reader, who knows the proper accentuation of the Engliſh lines, may, if he pleaſes, accentuate the Greek in the ſame manner. In conſequence of all this it is concluded, 'We have ſeen that the 'quantities of ſyllables are but the variations of 'accent;'

'accent;' and agreeably to the ſame doctrine, follows in a few pages this definition of a ſpondee: 'Where the accents fall with equal force 'on each ſyllable of a foot, their quantities will 'be equal.' It is ſcarcely neceſſary in oppoſition to ſuch a ſyſtem to produce the authorities of Ariſtotle, Dionyſius, Quintilian, and Plutarch. I ſhould think it fully ſufficient to hear an hexameter line with four or five ſpondees ſpoken with an equally ſtrong accent on each long ſyllable: the vileſt barking of an Engliſh minſtrel in Eraſmus' days were ſurely muſic to ſuch a line ſo pronounced.

But the moſt extraordinary explanation of the harmony of ancient verſe which I have any where ſeen is that of the very learned and ingenious author of *Elements of Criticiſm.* It is, I believe indeed perfectly ſingular, and ſo directly repugnant to what remains to us from the ancients upon the ſubject, that a particular refutation of it ſeems unneceſſary.

To imagine it poſſible to recover within many degrees the true pronunciation of the Greek and Latin languages were prepoſterous: but to re-

move errors and clear doubts concerning them, which equally relate to the general harmony of human ſpeech, appears not impracticable. If the principles maintained in theſe obſervations are good for any thing, they are equally applicable to the Greek and Latin, or any other language, as to the Engliſh; and it may be worth while to try their efficacy in throwing light upon ſome of thoſe points, which have hitherto remained in diſpute among the learned.

" One cannot but ſmile," ſays Dr. Foſter, " on " finding perſons engaged in the defence of a " favorite point, inſenſibly depart from thoſe " very principles for which they contend. This " is done by the diſputants in the caſe before us. " Quantity is the thing to which the enemies of " the preſent ſyſtem of accents declare the moſt " inviolable attachment. And yet this very quan- " tity they do all (moſt of them without knowing " it) moſt groſsly corrupt. This aſſertion I am " aware is very repugnant to the prejudices " of many perſons, who have long flattered them- " ſelves with an opinion, that in their pronun- " ciation of Greek and Latin, they ſtrictly " adhere to the right quantity, and will there-

" adhere

" fore ſtartle at the very mention of their
" violation of it. Yet this I am perſuaded will
" appear to an attentive Engliſh reader who ſhall
" make trial of a few lines, either in verſe or
" proſe, in any ancient author with this view.----
" Let me aſk the reader whether he does not
" pronounce the firſt ſyllables of the following
" words, tho they have different quantities,
" alike?

βροτος, *mortalis,*	ϛρωτος, *comedendus.*
ϛολος, *jactus*	ϛωλος, *gleba*
Δις, *Jovis*	Δις, *divinus*
θυμος, *cepa,*	θυμος, *animus*
ιον, *viola* / ιον, *participium*	ις, *jaculum*
λυκος, *lupus*	λευκος, *candidus,*
populus, people,	*populus,* a tree
alia, adj.	*alea,* ſubſt.
oculi, ſubſt.	*occuli,* verb.
calidus,	*callidus,*
edat, may eat	*edat,* may utter
plaga, climate / *plagæ,* nets	*plaga,* a blow.
lego, is,	*lego, as.*
dicam, ſubſt.	*dicam,* verb.

caro,

caro, ſubſt.	*caro*, adj.
latus, ſubſt.	*latus*, adj. / *latus*, particip.
nota, ſubſt.	*nota*, particip.
velis, verb.	*velis*, ſubſt.
viri, of *vir*,	*viri*, of *virus*.

——"If a perſon ſhould now write Latin or "Greek verſe, and for the meter conſult his ear "alone, he would in almoſt every line be de- "ceived by it. And if this were not the caſe, "if the ear did really receive as long every long "ſyllable, and as ſhort every ſhort one, what oc- "caſion would there be for the aſſiſtance of "books compoſed for our direction in the pro- "ſody of both languages, even after we have "been long practiſed in reading them? Would "not the ear be able to direct itſelf? How could "there be a doubt now about the quantity of ſo "many ſyllables, if we pronounced them as "the ancients did, whoſe *actual* pronunciation "of them did alone conſtitute and determine "their quantity? *The truth is, even thoſe ſcholars "whoſe practice and obſervation render books of pro- "ſody unneceſſary to them, do not in their Latin or "Greek compoſitions regulate their meter by their* ear, "*but their* judgment; *which, aided by experience*

"*and*

" *and memory, imperceptibly corrects the ear, and the* " *wrong impreſſions really made on it.*" Eſſay on accent and quantity, p. 361——367.

So candid a confeſſion of ſuch a kind from a man of very extenſive learning, who filled many years with much reputation a principal poſt in our moſt flouriſhing public ſchool, where peculiar attention is given to Latin and Greek poetry, muſt have its weight with every body. It is alſo not ſingular. That very learned critic, and very elegant writer, Mr Melmoth, had declared himſelf much to the ſame purpoſe before Dr. Foſter's book was publiſhed. 'A very ancient writer,' he ſays, in the 37th of the letters publiſhed under the name of Sir Thomas Fitzoſborne, 'has 'obſerved upon the following verſe in Virgil,

Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris,

'that if inſtead of *primus* we were to pronounce '*primis*, (*is* being long, and *us* ſhort) the intire 'harmony of the line would be deſtroyed. But 'whoſe ear is now ſo exquiſitely ſenſible as to 'perceive the diſtinction between thoſe two quan-'tities?' That is, in other words, Who can perceive

ceive the difference made by modern pronunciation between a long ſyllable and a ſhort one?

The way thus prepared for me I am imboldened to declare an opinion which I ſhould hardly otherwiſe have ventured, tho I have not the leaſt doubt of its being well founded. But I ſhall not yet hazard it without ſome farther preparation. Let me then aſk a queſtion: With a pronunciation ſo incorrect, and ſuch an utter inability to judge by the ear of the quantities of ſyllables, whence ariſes our perception of the harmony of Latin verſe? Whence is it that by the ear we pronounce one verſe good, another bad, tho the quantities, as far as the written language is concerned, are in each perfectly agreeable to ancient rule, tho the pauſe occurs in the ſame place in each, and neither has any want of ceſure? Why is the flow of Virgil's Georgics ſo much more pleaſing to us than that of Horace's ſatires? And whence is it that many moderns can rival the harmony of Virgil's verſification in their Latin compoſitions, that any of them would be aſhamed of lines ſo inharmonious as many in Horace appear to us, tho not one can judge by his ear of the quantities of ſyllables?

Dr.

Dr. Foſter informs us from the higheſt authority, from Quintilian himſelf, that our preſent accentuation of the Latin language is juſt. Now from a ſlight examination of the verſes of the more harmonious Latin poets, the hexameter, pentameter, and Sapphic particularly, it will be found that the accents are diſtributed with all the regularity requiſite to an accentual rhythmus; and in direct oppoſition to Mr. Webb's ſyſtem, they are perpetually falling to the lot of ſhort ſyllables. It is notorious that quantities are continually falſified in pronunciation without offending common ears at all; but any unuſual diſtribution of the accents inſtantly alarms the dulleſt. In ſhort, to an Engliſh ear a certain diſpoſition of accents, without any regard to quantity, will raiſe the idea of a Latin hexameter or pentameter as well as of any of our own ſorts of verſes, but the proper diſpoſition of long and ſhort ſyllables without the help of a rhythmical accentuation, will I doubt convey to very few Engliſh ears the idea of any verſe at all. This will appear to any one upon turning to Mr Gray's chronological lines in his *memoria technica*, which he properly enough calls ſomething reſembling hexameter verſe. The likeneſs conſiſts not at all in the meter, but in the accentuation only,

only, and therefore tho his lines differ in the moſt eſſential point from hexameter verſe as ſpoken by the Greeks and Romans, they bear a cloſe reſemblance to the hexameter verſe of modern pronunciation. Strange then as the aſſertion may appear to ſome, I will venture to ſay, that the rhythmus generally perceived in Latin verſe by Engliſhmen, and I believe I may add Italians, Spaniards, and perhaps all other modern Europeans, is not the metrical rhythmus, which with the ancients fundamentally conſtituted their poetry, but an accentual rhythmus only, which is peculiar to Latin poetry, and occaſioned by the peculiar accentuation of the language.

I hope the principles of poetical harmony maintained in theſe pages, are neither ſo ill founded, nor ſo ill explained but that ſome of my readers have been ſufficiently prepared for this aſſertion, and will aſſent to it immediately. I am however not without farther proofs for thoſe who ſhall be leſs ready to give it credit.

The accentuation of the Greek language differed very materially from the Latin. This point is ſo fully atteſted by Quintilian, Priſcian, and other writers of unqueſtionable authority, that

that it is beyond diſpute. Dr. Foſter has collected large proof in favor of the authenticity of the Greek accentual marks now in uſe; proof which, notwithſtanding the little regard paid to it by ſome, remains, and is likely to remain wholly uncontroverted. If in reading the Greek poets we pay due regard to theſe marks, we often find it wholly deſtitute of that rhythmical accentuation ſo remarkable in Latin poetry: the tones run wild, and we know not where to find the rhythmus. Hence, I doubt not, aroſe the quarrel of Iſaac Voſſius, and all his followers, with the accentual marks. When he red Latin poetry he found an accentual rhythmus which pleaſed him: he miſtook it for the metrical rhythmus and was ſatisfied. But if he took up a Greek poet, and red according to the accentual marks, he found no rhythmus at all. No wonder: of the true nature of quantity his writings ſhow him utterly ignorant: of a metrical rhythmus he could not therefore form an idea: of accentual rhythmus the Greek verſification is often deſtitute. But if he accentuated Greek poetry in the ſame manner as Latin, he found, of courſe, the ſame accentual rhythmus. He knew that Latin and Greek verſification were equally founded on a certain diſtribution of quantities, and not unnaturally concluded

concluded that the pronunciation by which alone *he* could produce a rhythmus, muſt alone be agreeable to the ancient quantities.

Thoſe who would ſtill diſpute the authenticity of the accentual marks, may incline to allow this for ſufficient proof; but, unfortunately for their cauſe, we have authorities againſt it which they cannot diſpute. Quintilian has a remarkable paſſage to the purpoſe: *Sed accentus, quoque cum rigore quodam, tum ſimilitudine ipſa, minus ſuaves habemus; quia ultima ſyllaba nec acuta unquam excitatur, nec in flexa circumducitur, ſed in gravem, vel duas graves cadit ſemper. Itaque tanto eſt ſermo Græcus Latino jucundior, ut noſtri poetæ, quoties dulce carmen eſſe voluerunt, illorum id nominibus exornent.* Lib. II. c. 10. An inſtance from Virgil of this introduction of Greek words in Latin poetry, with Servius' remark upon it, will perfectly explain what Quintilian here means:

Caſtorea, Eliadum palmas Epiros equarum:

Sane Epiros *Græce profertur; unde etiam* e *habet accentum: nam ſi Latinum eſſet*, Epirus, Epiri, pi *haberet, quia longa eſt.* "The word *Epiros*, "preſerving its Greek form, muſt be accented "upon the firſt ſyllable according to the Greek pro-

" pronunciation; for if it were Latinized, *Epirus*,
" *Epiri*, the ſecond ſyllable would have the
" accent becauſe it is long." So far then was that rhythmical accentuation ſo common in Latin poetry, from being the moſt pleaſing part of their poetical harmony to the Romans themſelves, that their beſt poets, Virgil and the *numeroſus Horatius* in particular, took every opportunity for introducing a foreign pronunciation purpoſely to deſtroy it. But there are many verſes among the Latin poets, which will be void if it, unleſs violence is done even to the Latin accentuation; and there remain to us particular criticiſms, many of which Dr. Foſter has collected, on the accents of innumerable Greek words, which would alone ſuffice to prove that the harmony of the Greek poetry was wholly independent of that regular accentuation which in Latin verſe forms the delight of modern ears.

I am far from ſingular in thinking that the harmony of ancient poetry is not properly expreſſed by any modern pronunciation. High authorities have been already produced in ſupport of the opinion, and many more might be produced. Scaliger attempted to reform the pronunciation of his time by ſhowing with muſical marks, agreeable to the information which remains to us

on

on that head from the ancients, how the proper quantities ought to be preſerved together with the proper accentuation. Dr. Bentley has alſo written much on the ſubject: but how can we apply, or even underſtand their rules, while it remains wholly undetermined what it is in pronunciation that diſtinguiſhes a long ſyllable from a ſhort one? This point being once ſet in a clear light, as I hope it is in the foregoing pages, it will not be difficult to acquire a competent idea of the harmony of the learned languages. But in order to find what is right, it will be uſeful to examine a little more particularly what is wrong.

The falſification of the harmony by Engliſh ſcholars in their pronunciation of Latin, with regard to eſſential points, ariſes from two cauſes only: firſt from a total inattention to the length of vowel-ſounds, making them long or ſhort merely as chance directs; and ſecondly, from ſounding doubled conſonants as only one letter. The remedy of this laſt fault is obvious. With regard to the firſt, we have already obſerved that each of our vowels hath its general long ſound, and its general ſhort ſound totally different. Thus the ſhort ſound of *e* lengthened is expreſſed by the letter *a*, and the ſhort ſound of *i* lengthened

is expreſſed by the letter *e*: and with all theſe anomalies uſual in the application of vowel-characters to the vowel-ſounds of our own language, we proceed to the application of vowel-ſounds to the vowel-characters of the Latin. Thus in the firſt ſyllable of *ſidus* and *nomen*, which ought to be long, and of *miſer* and *onus*, which ought to be ſhort, we equally uſe the common long ſound of the vowels: but in the oblique caſes, *ſideris*, *nominis*, *miſeri*, *oneris*, &c. we uſe quite another ſound, and that a ſhort one. Theſe ſtrange anomalies are not in common to us with our ſouthern neighbours the French, Spaniards, and Italians. They pronounce *ſidus*, according to our orthography, *ſeedus*, and in the oblique caſes preſerve the ſame long ſond of the *i*: *nomen* they pronounce as we do, and preſerve in the oblique caſes the ſame long ſound of the *o*. The Italians alſo in their own language pronounce doubled conſonants as diſtinctly as the two moſt diſcordant mutes of their alphabet. Whatever therefore they may want of expreſſing the true harmony of the Latin language, they certainly avoid the moſt glaring and abſurd faults in our manner of pronouncing it.

It is matter of curioſity to obſerve with what regularity we uſe theſe ſoleciſms in the pronunciation of Latin. When the penultimate is accented, its vowel, if followed but by a ſingle conſonant, is always long, as in Dr. Foſter's examples. When the antepenultimate is accented, its vowel is, without any regard to the requiſite quantity, pronounced ſhort, as in *mirábile frígidus*; except the vowel of the penultimate be followed by a vowel, and then the vowel of the antepenultimate is with as little regard to true quantity pronounced long, as in *maneo*, *redeat*, *odium*, *imperium*. Quantity is however vitiated to make *i* ſhort even in this caſe, as in *oblivio*, *vinea*, *virium*. The only difference we make in pronunciation between *vinea*, and *venia*, is that to the vowel of the firſt ſyllable of the former, which ought to be long, we give a ſhort ſound; to that of the latter, which ought to be ſhort, we give the ſame ſound but lengthened. *U* accented, is always, before a ſingle conſonant, pronounced long, as in *humerus*, *fugiens*. Before two conſonants no vowel ſound is ever made long, except that of the diphthong *au*, ſo that whenever a doubled conſonant occurs, the preceding ſyllable is ſhort. Unaccented vowels we treat with

with no more ceremony in Latin than in our own language.

With ſuch a pronunciation what havoc do we not make of the harmony of Latin and Greek poetry? Where almoſt ſhall we find a line that we do not vitiate? Take the following:

Qualis ŭbi ad tĕrras abrupto sĭdere nimbus
It mārе per mēdium; miſeris heu praeſcia longe
Hŏrreſcunt corda agricolis; dābit ille ruinas
Arboribus ſtragemque sātis; ruet omnia late:
Antevolant, ſonitumque fĕrunt ad lĭtora venti.
Æn. XII. 451.

All the marked ſyllables have in our pronunciation falſe quantities, ſuch as the marks indicate; and to complete the account of the corruption of the harmony, we muſt add the pronunciation of thoſe ſyllables which ought not to be pronounced at all.

I ſhall be far from preſuming to inform the world how Latin and Greek ought to be ſpoken. But we may obſerve, that as it is impoſſible, ſo is it not very material to know exactly what ſound the Greeks and Romans gave to every letter or com-

bination of letters. Whether we pronounce the vowels in the Engliſh or Italian manner, whether we ſound the beta as *b* or as *v*, zeta as *ds* or as *sd* cannot ſignify much. What we ſhould endeavour to acquire is not the particular ſound of the letters, ſo much as the general harmony of the language, and concerning this we have ſuch information from the ancients themſelves that it is our own faults if we err greatly. The two principal efficients of the harmony of human ſpeech are accent and quantity. We have reaſon to ſuppoſe that our uſual accentuation of Latin, however it may want of many elegancies in the pronunciation of the Auguſtan age, is yet ſufficiently juſt to give with tolerable accuracy that part of the general harmony of the language of which accent is the efficient. We have alſo pretty full information from the poets what ſyllables ought to have a long, and what a ſhort quantity. To preſerve then in our pronunciation the true harmony of the language, we have only to take care to give the vowels a long ſound or a ſhort ſound as the quantity may require, and, when doubled conſonants occur, to pronounce each diſtinctly.

We might very ſafely aſſert that the Greeks and Romans certainly did pronounce doubled conſonants

consonants after the Italian manner, were there no farther proof of it than what arises from the circumstance of syllables with short vowels being always long when a doubled consonant follows the vowel. But proof remains to the very point: Καλλίστρατος, and Αννοῶν; says Demetrius Phalereus, are words of an agreeable sound; ἥτε γὰρ τῶν λάμβδα σύνκρουσις ἠχῶδές τι ἔχει; καὶ ἡ τῶν νῦ γραμμάτων. De Eloc. 176. Now what is the σύνχρουσις of the lambdas and nus in common English pronunciation? The difficulty, or rather the awkardness of altering our usual pronunciation of the Latin vowels, so as to give the proper quantities to all syllables, were perhaps most easily overcome by also adopting at once the Italian sound of all the vowels. Beside other advantages, it would instantly remove the apparent absurdity of giving a totally different sound to the same vowel of the same word in different circumstances; as to the *a* in *flamen* and *flaminis*, the *e* in *ego* and *egomet*, the *o* in *doceo* and *docui*; the *i* in *vigeo* and *viget*, *viguit* and *vigebat*. Indeed the difficulty which many learned writers have fairly confessed they found in conceiving the difference between long and short vowels, appears not a little extraordinary, as that difference is so palpable in numberless instances in our

own

own language. I have been particulary ſurprized to find a man who poſſeſſes the harmony of our language in ſo eminent a degree as Mr. Melmoth, ſo totally at a loſs about it as he appears to have been by the paſſage above quoted, concerning the difference between the laſt ſyllables of *primus*, and *primis*, where he aſks, 'Whoſe ear is now ſo 'exquiſitely ſenſible as to perceive the diſtinction 'between thoſe two quantities?' The truth is, that in our uſual pronunciation of thoſe words there is no diſtinction of quantity perceptible perhaps even by an Athenian ear. But we are well aſſured that the difference between long and ſhort quantities in the Greek and Latin languages, was of no ſuch unaccountable minuteneſs; that long ſyllables in fact differed in quantity from long ſyllables, and ſhort from ſhort; but that poets and rhetoricians did not concern themſelves about ſuch niceties in the meaſure of ſound, for that to their purpoſes all long ſyllables were equal, and all ſhort ſyllables were equal, and the difference between the two kinds palpable. If Mr. Melmoth had only adverted to the difference between the ſhort ſound of the *i* in the Engliſh word *promiſe*, and the long ſound of the ſame vowel in the word *ſunriſe*, he would have found

that

that the want of a perceptible difference between the quantities of the laſt ſyllables of *primus* and *primis*, is not owing to any deficiency in Engliſh organs of hearing, but wholly to a groſs fault in the uſual Engliſh pronunciation of the latter word.

Thus eaſily then might the true harmony of the Latin language be expreſſed with tolerable accuracy. That of the Greek, notwithſtanding the advantage of its two long vowels and its diphthongs, has, from its accentuation, more difficulty; yet a difficulty far from inſuperable. Dr. Foſter holds, with many other learned men, that the grave mark in Greek words of more than one ſyllable, as Θεὸς, ἀνὴρ, ſtands for an acute tone. Were there no proof of this, we might ſuppoſe that the laſt ſyllable of words thus marked, had, like Engliſh words in Scotiſh pronunciation, a grave tone more powerful than the acute, which in that caſe muſt have been given to ſome other ſyllable, as we are aſſured that no word was without an acute. But the proof which Dr. Foſter brings in ſupport of his opinion appears really incontrovertible; and in conſequence of this we may hold for certain, that, in Greek pronunciation as in Engliſh,

Engliſh, the acute was in all words the moſt powerful accent. Indeed the accounts remaining from the ancients, of the nature of the grave, very much favors this opinion, for they always call it a remiſſion of the voice. This point then being admitted, there remains but one circumſtance in Greek accentuation which can have any difficulty for an Engliſh voice, and that is its ſituation on antepenultimates where the penultimate has a long vowel. This being contrary to the general bent of Engliſh pronunciation, it often happens that when an Engliſhman firſt attempts to acute the antepenultimate of ſuch words as ἀ ειδε, and ἄρȣρα, he does it ungracefully, diſpleaſes his own ear, and is diſguſted. But does he ſucceed more to his ſatisfacton in his firſt attempts at French or Italian pronunciation? If on the contrary, he acutes the penultimate, the pronunciation is familiar to him, he executes it more gracefully, and his ear will of courſe be better ſatisfied. But the caſe will be exactly the ſame if, unpractiſed in Italian pronunciation, after ſome attempts which will neceſſarily be awkward ones, to ſpeak any Italian word in the Italian manner, he then pronounces it in the Engliſh manner as he would if it were Latin. And I will venture to affirm, that any Engliſh-

man

man will as eaſily bring his voice to a graceful pronunciation of Greek words with an acuted ſhort antepenultimate, and long penultimate, as to a graceful Italian pronunciation of moſt Italian words.

But tho the difficulties of the Greek acute are eaſily conquered in proſe (I have indeed no doubt but any perſon of moderately good ear, will after very ſhort practice be better pleaſed with the flow of any harmonious proſe period pronounced according to the accentual marks, than if the Latin accentuation be uſed) yet it is far otherwiſe in verſe. We are never taught what quantity is. Our inſtructors in claſſical learning lay much ſtreſs on our knowing what ſyllables were long and what ſhort in ancient pronunciation, and tell us that to make verſe a certain diſpoſition of ſuch long and ſhort ſyllables is neceſſary: but they never inform us why; and to our ear the verſe is juſt as good without any ſuch attention to quantity, provided only that the accents be diſpoſed in a certain order. Thus they inſiſt upon a wide difference between the *a* in *pater* and the *a* in *mater*, between the *u* in *myrtus* and the *u* in *virtus*, between *calidus* with a ſingle *l*, and *callidus* with a double *l*; yet they neither

teach

teach us how to diſtinguiſh them in pronunciation, nor themſelves make any diſtinction. Thus might a Chineſe preceptor, utterly ignorant of Engliſh pronunciation, but learned in the laws of Engliſh riming, as they might be acquired from our poets or collected in a gradus, inform his pupil that *cough* and *off*, *rough* and *bluff*, *plough* and *now*, *though* and *beau*, *through* and *true*, *thought* and *grout*, tho guided by the orthography, he made a wide difference in pronunciation between the final ſounds, were yet perfectly good rimes; but that *cough*, *rough*, *plough*, *though*, *through*, to which he gave the the ſame final ſound, were yet no rimes at all. The pupil might indeed, thro confidence in his tutor's knowledge, give him credit for what he advanced, but would certainly acquire a ſtrange idea of Engliſh riming. With ſuch inſtruction is it wonderful that we ſhould grow up in ignorance of what a metrical rhythmus is, or that we ſhould become ſtrongly attached to that accentual rhythmus, the only one which our pronunciation produces, and of which the ear becomes ſenſible in our very earlieſt acquaintance with the Latin poets? *

It

* The author of the Elements of Criticiſm, exhibits in his explanation, already mentioned, of the harmony of the

It is no eaſy nor momentary taſk to reform the taſte of any of the ſenſes, where it is confirmed by long cuſtom. The partiality of the French to their national muſic, which no other people can reliſh, is very remarkable; yet ſome of them have been brought to a taſte for Italian muſic,

the antient languages, a remarkable inſtance of the force of ſuch early prejudice. He goes ſo far as to deny the exiſtence of feet in ancient poetry, and particularly aſſerts, that the dactyls and ſpondees of hexameter verſe were merely ideal, not only with us, but with the ancients themſelves. If the reader ſhould turn to that explanation, he will find it really the ſtrongeſt teſtimony that one man can give in favor of the aſſertion I have made, that the harmony generally perceived in Latin verſe, is accentual, not metrical. He will certainly not ſubſcribe to the learned author's ſyſtem if he pays the leaſt regard to any of the Greek or Roman critics who have left any thing on the ſubject of the harmony of their reſpective languages. If indeed that ſyſtem has any other foundation than the accentual harmony I have ſpoken of, Dionyſius and Quintilian in particular muſt have been dreaming while they wrote. The the author even expreſſes his opinion that Cicero had an erroneous notion of *numerus*, the foundation of all harmony. See El. of Crit. ch. xviii. ſec. 4. Cicero's exemplification of *numerus*, there quoted, and ſuppoſed falſe, is to the ſame purpoſe with that of Longinus quoted in a note to the ſecond ſection of this eſſay, and perfectly agreeable to Quintilian's explanation quoted in the ſame note.

muſic, and thoſe can no longer bear their own. It may well be doubted whether the moſt elegant piece of Grecian architecture, or the moſt beautiful painting of Raphael or Correggio, would pleaſe a Chineſe, who ſhould be the beſt judge of the painting and architecture of his own country: yet it were not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that ſuch a one might acquire a correct taſte in the fine arts after the Grecian model; and were that once effected, we may conclude that pagodas and nodding mandarins, and the ſmall-footed goddeſſes of Chineſe beauty, would have very few charms remaining for him. Thoſe therefore who cannot on the firſt trial be ſatisfied with Greek poetry ſpoken with the Greek accentuation, muſt not thence conclude that they are incapable of reliſhing the true harmony of Greek verſification; or even that they will not in time prefer ſuch a degree of it as a modern voice may, with ſome practice, expreſs, to that more formal Latin melody with which the Romans themſelves were ſo little ſatisfied.

By the time the voice and ear are familiarized to the Greek accentuation in proſe compoſitions, it will become much more ſatisfactory even in verſe;

verſe; and in the hexameter there will be found only two or at moſt three ſituations of the ſtrong accent toward the end of the line which will any longer appear awkward. It is at the concluſion of a verſe, as at the concluſion of a muſical ſtrain, that the ear expects the fulleſt harmony, and will leaſt bear any deviation from what it is uſed to. Latin hexameters have almoſt conſtantly the ſhort accent on the firſt ſyllable of the two laſt feet; and cuſtom from almoſt infancy, gives ſuch conſequence to that diſpoſition as to make it almoſt eſſential to our idea of an hexameter verſe.* It muſt undoubtedly require ſome time to get the better of ſo deeprooted a prejudice; and a very accurate pronunciation will be neceſſary to make the cloſe of the verſe muſical and ſatisfactory without the aſſiſtance of the rhythmical accentuation. Something of the ſame kind may be obſerved in our own poetry. If rimed verſe be almoſt ever ſo ill delivered, the meaſure intended is eaſily diſtinguiſhed by the dulleſt ear; but it requires an accurate delivery of

* This appears to be the caſe with the very learned and ingenious author of Elements of Criticiſm. One cannot but be curious to know how his ſyſtem can be made to apply to ſuch concluſions of hexameters as *Procumbit humi bos* in Virgil, and *Ridiculus mus* in Horace.

of blank verſe to make the ear ſenſible even that it is verſe, and a quick ſenſe of hearing to perceive all the beauties of the harmony. Thus rime in accentual poetry, and rhythmical accentuation in metrical poetry ſeem chiefly calculated to help bad voices, and ſatisfy dull ears.

I have hitherto ſpoken of the hexameter verſe only. The other meaſures uſed by the Latin poets are regularly more or leſs pleaſing to us as they have a more or leſs perfect accentual rhythmus: but the accentual rhythmus that pleaſes in all theſe, is no leſs repugnant than that of the hexameter, to their ideas who hold a ſtrong accent to be the ſame thing with a long quantity. Thus in the pentameter we require the accent on the laſt ſyllable of the laſt dactyl, as it is conſtantly found in Ovid: but in the Sapphic we require it on the ſecond ſyllable of the dactyl, as it is commonly found in Horace, and we are beſt pleaſed with that meaſure when the laſt ſyllable of the ſpondee is accented, which with the Latin poets is alſo uſual; circumſtances which in the two laſt feet of an hexameter, where they frequently occur in Greek poetry, diſturb us prodigiouſly. There ſcarcely needs other proof that the rhythmus

mus commonly perceived in Latin poetry is accentual, not metrical.

Critics have thought it worthy of notice, that Horace, in all the variety of his odes, has left but one example of the Ionic meaſure, of which the Ionians themſelves, a people endowed with great delicacy of ear, ſeem to have been very fond. Mr. Say and Dr. Foſter would account for this circumſtance by ſuppoſing a difference between the national taſte of the Romans and Greeks. We have however no reaſon for ſuppoſing that ſuch a difference exiſted. The Romans formed their taſte in all the arts on the Greek model, and ſeem in particular to have been better pleaſed with the Greek verſification than with their own. Dr. Bentley, it ſeems, thought the difficulties only of that meaſure for the Latin language diſcouraged Horace from a ſecond attempt. If I might be allowed to gueſs on the occaſion, I ſhould ſuppoſe the ſweetneſs of the Greek Ionics, even to a Roman ear, induced him to make that one attempt, and that the unfitneſs of his own language for that particular meaſure, deterred him from a ſecond. The *rigor et ſimilitudo*, that ſtifneſs and ſameneſs of the Latin accentuation appear in a ſtronger light

light in that ode than perhaps in any other compoſition in the language. The accent falls almoſt conſtantly on the third ſyllable of the Ionic foot, whence reſults a formality that is quite diſguſting, and a kind of halting progreſſion, which were perhaps not improperly compared to the walking of a lame horſe. In two or three places indeed the accentuation is varied by means of the ceſure, as it is alſo in two lines quoted by Dr. Foſter from Terentianus Maurus: but we may well ſuppoſe the difficulty of managing the accentuation in that manner throughout a poem of any length, ſufficient to deter any man of poetical genius from the attempt.

Whether it be poſſible at this day to trace the ſteps by which the metrical cadence of the Latins was changed for the accentual cadence of modern Italy, I have not the means of knowing. It is probably enough not poſſible; for utter deſtruction came upon the Latin tongue at an early period, by haſty ſtrides, and amid infinite deſolation and confuſion. With the Greek it was otherwiſe: that language fell by a very gradual decay. We are told that even at the final overthrow of the eaſtern empire it was retained by the learned and polite in a great degree

of

of purity, tho the vulgar dialect was become another language.* But long before any fundamental alteration appears to have been made in the language, a new kind of verſification aroſe, by

* ‘ Philelphus, who in the 15th century was at Conſtantinople, ſeems to have made very particular inquiries ‘ into the ſtate of the language and pronunciation there. ‘ In a letter to Peter Perleo in 1441, twelve years before ‘ the taking of that city by the Turks, he ſays, “ that he “ took pains to get what information he could in regard to “ their language from the ſchool maſters there, yet he “ could meet with nothing ſatisfactory from them.” But ‘ tho he deſcribes the depraved ſtate of the Greek tongue ‘ among the common inhabitants of that city, he tells his ‘ friend, that it ſtill retained its ancient purity among perſons of higher rank and learning.

‘ In a letter written about two years before the taking of ‘ Conſtantinople, he ſpeaks of *linguam vulgarem eam, quæ* ‘ *et a plebe erat depravata atque corrupta ob peregrinorum* ‘ *mercatorumque multitudinem, qui quotidie Conſtanti-* ‘ *nopolim confluebant, in urbemque recepti incolæ Græciſ-* ‘ *que admixti, locutionem optimam infuſcarunt inquinarunt-* ‘ *que.* Apud Hodium de Græc. illuſt. p. 188.

‘ *Græci quibus lingua depravata non ſit, & quos ipſi tum* ‘ *ſequimur, tum imitamur, ita loquuntur vulgo hac etiam* ‘ *tempeſtate, ut Ariſtophanes comicus, ut Euripides tragicus* ‘ *ut oratores omnes, ut hiſtoriographi, ut philoſophi etiam ipſi,* ‘ *et Plato et Ariſtoteles. Viri Aulici veterem ſermonis dig-* ‘ *nitatem atque elegantiam retinebant : inprimiſque* nobiles mulieres,

by the name of στίχοι πολιτικοὶ, which tranſlators term in Latin *verſus politici*. It has puzzled many learned men to diſcover the harmony of theſe verſes. Some have ſuppoſed them to be meant for iambics of the tetrameter catalectic kind: but this cannot be without ſuppoſing alſo that the

‘ mulieres, *quibus cum nullum eſſet omnino cum viris*
‘ *peregrinis commercium, merus ille ac purus Græcorum*
‘ *ſermo ſervabatur intactus.* Idem in epiſt. *ann.* 1451.
‘ A pleaſing and affecting picture this of the Greek court
‘ a year or two before its deſtruction.

‘ The ſame perſon in a letter to Saxolus Pratenſis in
‘ 1441, after diſſuading him from going into Peloponneſe,
‘ where there was nothing that deſerved his regard except
‘ Georgius Gemiſtus, adviſes him rather to viſit Conſtanti-
‘ nople: *illic enim et viri eruditi ſunt nonnulli, et culti*
‘ *mores, et ſermo etiam nitidus.*

‘ The particular mention made by Philelphus of the wo-
‘ men of the Byzantine court keeping the purity of the
‘ Greek language, agrees well with an obſervation of Cicero
‘ in his third book *de Oratore*, “ Facilius mulieres in-
“ corruptam antiquitatem obſervant, quod multorum
“ ſermonis expertes, ea tenent ſemper quæprima didi-
“ cerunt.” Eſſay on accent and quantity, chap. vi. where the curious reader may find much more ſaid in vindication of the latter Greeks from the charge of barbariſm, which has often been ſo inconſiderately, and often ſo illiberally urged againſt them.

the author miſtook acute accents for long quantities, as the reader may ſee in the following lines ſelected by Dr. Foſter, from a poem of this kind by John Tzetzes, who lived in the 12th century:

Ὁπόσον δύναιτο λαβεῖν ἐκέλευε χρυσίον.
Κοῖσον κινεῖ πρὸς γέλωτα βαδίζει τ' ἐν τῇ θέᾳ.
Ὁ Ἀρτακάμας βασιλεὺς Φρυγίας τῆς μεγάλης.
Ἡρόδοτος τὸν Γύγην δὲ ποιμένα μὲν ἐ λέγει.
Ἡ Ερεχθέως Πρόκρις τε τ' Πραξιθέας κόρη.
Ἀννίβας ὡς Διόδωρος γράφει τ' Δίων ἅμα.

The intended meter of theſe lines, the doctor adds, is ſuppoſed to be the ſame with that of the following:

Ὦ; ἡδὺ καινοῖς πράγμασιν τ' δεξίοις ὁμιλεῖν,
Καὶ τῶν καθεζώτων νόμων ὑπερφρονεῖν δύνασθαι.
Ariſtoph.

Nam ſi remittent quippiam Philumenæ dolores.
Quot commodas res attuli? quot autem ademi curas? Ter.

But it happens to be very certain that Tzetzes could not make any ſuch miſtake. 'This clearly 'appears,' as Dr. Foſter has obſerved, 'in thoſe 'iambics of his at the end of the eleventh *chiliad*,

'written according to the old rules of good meter,
'beginning thus,

Τὰς τῆς ἄνω Μυσίας ὄρος μάθε,

'and ending,

Λέγων γὰρ ἓν τι μυρία (γε) παρατρέχει.

'The ſame regard for due quantity is ſeen in a
'long poem of iambics by the ſame author at
'the end of his thirteenth *chiliad*, περὶ παίδων
'ἀγωγῆς; in a ſhort poem of hexameters, and
'that followed by another of iambics. What is
'very particular, and at the ſame a ſtrong proof
'of what I have ſaid above of Tzetzes' being ac-
'quainted with the true quantity, is, that in ſome
'introductory verſes prefixed to his poem *de liberis*
'*inſtituendis*, he ſpeaks with diſapprobation and
'contempt of that barbarous meter which then
'prevailed. Such he calls the meter of a *mean*,
'*ſtrolling*, *vulgar muſe*, μέσης ἀγυρτίδος,

Ἡ τὴν ποδῶν εὐρυθμον ἐ τηρεῖ βάσιν.
Καὶ τί γαρ ἂν τὶς τεχνικῷ γράφοι μέτρῳ,
Ποδάς τε τηροῖ πανταχῆ; ἢ διχρόνως,

Καὶ πάντα λεπτῶς, ὡς χρεών, ἀποξέσαι,
Ἴσων δοκούντων τεχνικῶν τε βαρβάρων,
Καὶ τῶν ἀτέχνων ὡς σοφῶν κρατυμένων;
Καὶ ταῦτα ποίοις; τοις δοκοῦσι πανσόφοις.
Οὕτω τὸ καλὸν ἐξαπέπτη τε βίᾳ,
Οὕτω κατεκράτησεν ἡ χυδαιότης.

Dr. Foſter's concluſion from the whole is, that the στίχοι πολιτικοὶ are not intended for iambic, and for want of knowing what elſe to think, he ſuppoſes them to be looſe trochaics, adding, 'Voſſius himſelf ſays, *Maxime ſimiles ſunt Archilochiis catalecticis.*

The truth of the matter is evidently this. In ſo extenſive an empire as that of Conſtantinople, under ſo bad a government, tottering for ages, yet finally overthrown but by repeated ſtrokes of adverſity, where an able prince ſometimes ariſing, reſtored, for a period, power arts, and ſciences, only to fall in the next weak reign, or by the diſturbances of a bloody revolution to a lower pitch of decay, barbariſm would of courſe overrun the remote provinces, and ſpread by degrees throughout the lower and middle ranks, while the higher, kept together by the attractions of the capital,

and

and of a court always ſplendid, would retain ſome degree of ancient learning, politeneſs, and good taſte. In this ſtate of things there would be poets who wrote for the many, and poets who wrote for the few. Theſe retained the old form of verſification; the others uſed the στίχοι πολιτικοὶ, which, I imagine, may be properly tranſlated *vulgar verſe*. There would be alſo ſome who would write ſometimes for the croud, and ſometimes for the learned and polite; and of this number was John Tzetzes. The *vulgar verſe* may well puzzle thoſe who never adverted to the real nature of accentual verſification: but if the opinions maintained in this eſſay concerning our own verſification are juſt, no difficulty will remain concerning this of the Conſtantinopolitans. It is moſt manifeſtly accentual, its cadence determined by accent, and wholly independent of quantity. Tzetzes himſelf, in the paſſage above quoted, declares it independent of ancient cadences, and not formed of ancient feet, τὴν ποδῶν ἔυρυθμον ὃ τηρεῖ βάσιν, and Dr. Foſter has, without ſuch a deſign, ſhown it to be accentual, by producing two Engliſh lines in the very ſame accentual meaſure:

I'll

I'll climb the frosty mountains high, and there I'll
coin the weather,
I'll tear the rainbow from the sky, and tie both
ends together.

Even the variations of the place of the accent are mostly the very same that our accentual measure of the same kind admits. A complete passage will show this perhaps more satisfactorily than the unconnected lines above-quoted from Dr. Foster's essay. I have no opportunity of giving such a passage from the works of Tzetzes, but the following from Constantinus Manasses may serve equally well:

Ὁ γάρ τοι παῖς τῦ Κώνσαν[Θ, ἄρτι λαβὼν τὰ
σκῆπ[ρα
(Τ ἄνομα δὲ τῷ βασιλεῖ βρεφόθεν Κωνσαν[ίνος,)
Σ[όλῳ βχρῆι τὴν Σικελῶν κα[αλαμβάνει νῆσον·
Καὶ πάντας τὺς αὐ[όχειρας χ τὺς ὀλεθρεργά[ας
Τ ἄ βασιλέως χ πατρὸς ἐνδίκως απωσφάτ[α,
Καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς Μιζίζιον τὸν τετυραννηκό[α.

Dr. Foster, after giving his opinion concerning this versification, adds, 'There is mentioned by 'Fabricius, Bibl. Græc. lib. v. c. 7. p. 48. a 'manuscript

'manuſcript piece by this Tzetzes, intitled *Verſus 'politici de pedibus et metris poeticis*, in Bibl. 'Vindob. et Cod. Barocc. 131. Fabric. in the 'ſame book, p. 17, 18, mentions likewiſe a 'M. S. of his, *De omni verſuum genere, et de verſi-'bus politicis*. M. S. Reg. 84. A ſight of this 'laſt piece would probably clear up this matter 'at once.' Theſe works being written at ſo critical an æra of the Greek language, muſt probably contain much matter of curioſity, but ſeem not at all neceſſary to decide the preſent queſtion. The *vulgar verſe* ſhows of itſelf on what its harmony depends. Nay more, the very meaſure of the Conſtantinopolitans is ſtill uſed by the modern Greeks, among whom, as far as I have been able to learn, no trace of metrical verſification remains. Some ſpecimens of their poetry, and particularly of this accentual meaſure of their forefathers, may be ſeen in the *Voyage litteraire de la Gréce* of M. *Guys* *.

'I know not whether what has been ſaid will be allowed any weight as preſumptive proof in favor of

* The accentuation, as well as the pointing of the Greek ſongs in M. Guys' work, is, from errors of the preſs, extremely incorrect, but the reader will have no difficulty in diſcerning the general ſcope of the harmony.

of the authenticity of the Greek accentual marks, but it certainly brings to the ground any proof which ſome critics would have raiſed againſt them on the foundation of theſe στίχοι πολιτικοὶ. The accentuation is of all circumſtances in a decaying language, the leaſt ſubject to change. This appears eminently in our own language, as derived from the Saxon: it appears equally in the Italian and Spaniſh, as derived from the Latin; but moſt particularly it appears in the modern Greek, or as the Greeks themſelves call it the Romaic. This language is by no means ſo much altered from the ancient Greek as many ſuppoſe, and ſome authors have aſſerted. The accentuation particularly is almoſt without exception the ſame: not only, as in the Italian and Spaniſh, the ſtrong accent remaining ſtill on the ſame ſyllable in all words preſerved from the parent ſpeech, but the general rules of accentuation the ſame alſo *. Voltaire ſays of this language, that it

* *Antepenultima duntaxat acuitur*, ſays Portius in his grammar of this language, *ſi ultima fuerit brevis, ut* ἄνθρωπος, homo. *Cæterum nonnulli ex recentioribus Græcis non ſolent reſpicere ad ultimam ſyllabam, ſed*, Latinorum more, habita ratione quantitatis penultimæ, *antepenultimam acuunt ſi penultima fuerit brevis, ut* ἁγιώτατη ſanctiſſima, *pro* ἁγιωτάτη, ἄδικος injuſtus, *pro* ἄδικος. *Melius tamen videtur et elegantius regulas accentuum obſervare literalis grammaticæ, ad quam velim confugias.*

it is, with all its corruptions, perhaps at this day the moſt harmonious language ſpoken in the world.

Some moderns are ſo attached to rime, that not contented with aſſerting its merit, they would aſſert its antiquity alſo, and even make it an indiſpenſible circumſtance of poetry. The modern Greeks frequently uſe rime; but the firſt introducers of the accentual cadence into the Greek language were apparently unacquainted with it, and certainly did not find it neceſſary to accentual verſification. Hence it ſhould ſeem that the people, probably orientals, from whom they acquired the accentual cadence, were alſo unacquainted with it. It is not for me to urge the probability that accent was the fundamental efficient of harmony in many of the oriental languages. There are living perſons of parts and learning well verſed in the principal of thoſe now ſpoken, who might give ſatisfactory information on that ſubject, and might poſſibly carry their inquiries ſo far, that even the harmony of Hebrew poetry might not remain in its preſent total obſcurity. But I have ſomewhere red, mentioned indeed as an extraordinary circumſtance, of Arabic poetry with rime, and Dr. Percy informs us, from Wormius,

Wormius, of Gothic poetry with that ornament. I am however inclined to think, tho I have no certain ground to go upon, that rime was the genuine growth of modern Italy. Thence it was imported into our own country with the multitudes of Italian prieſts who flocked hither in the firſt reigns after the conqueſt: Thence it was in the ſame manner carried all over popiſh chriſtendom: thence thoſe Arabians might have learnt it who puſhed their conqueſts weſtward; and thence the Genoeſe and Venetians carried it to the countries bordering on the Archipelago *. The Provencials indeed, and even the Normans are ſaid by ſome to have led the way to the Italians in the arts of poetry; but be this as it may, we muſt allow that the ſmoothneſs of termination, ſo peculiar to the Italians, gives peculiar grace to their rimes; and the facility of riming in their language is doubtleſs a ſtrong inducement to to their poets to adopt ſo effectual a method for making their compoſitions not proſe. Neither of theſe certainly was among the allurements of our Engliſh poets to delight in rime. Poſſibly the difficulty of riming in our language might only whet their courage; for if Boileau had reaſon to complain of that difficulty in the French language,

* So ſays M. Guys in his Voy. litt. de la Gréce.

language, much more have our poets. I ſhould not however quarrel with them for their perſeverance in braving theſe difficulties, if they would take care that it ſhould be in no reſpect injurious to our language. But we are in great danger of loſing by its means the nobleſt and moſt muſical diphthong our pronunciation poſſeſſes, the *oi*, which, in the great ſcantineſs of our long and open vowel-ſounds, we can very ill ſpare. I am by no means the firſt to make this obſervation, but in my zeal for the honor of our language, I cannot help repeating it. Some have attributed to the ſame cauſe the loſs of a ſyllable from the paſt tenſe of verbs, from the third perſon ſingular of the preſent tenſe, and from the paſſive participle, which in the ſuperabundance of our monoſyllables, is alſo in many caſes no trivial damage.

I am wandering from the purpoſe of this ſection, yet I cannot conclude it without adding a few words concerning a circumſtance of which Dr. Foſter has taken notice. 'The miſapplica-
'tion of the Greek accentual marks,' he ſays,
'ſeems to have followed words into the Latin
'language, and corrupted their pronunication
'there in the time of Auſonius, who makes *idola*

'from

'from εἴδωλα, and *eremus* from ἔρημος dac-
'tyls.' Eſſ. on Ac. and Quant. p. 204. I know not whether it is not rather preſumptuous to call this circumſtance a corruption. When the elder Romans latinized Greek words they frequently altered the accentuation. Thus the word Ἤπειρος of which the Greeks acuted the firſt ſyllable, the Romans called Epírus, with the acute on the ſecond. The reaſon was, that the place of the acute was commonly determined in Greek pronunciation by the quantity of the laſt ſyllable, in Latin always by that of the penultimate. Where the penultimate was long, the Romans never gave the acute to any other ſyllable, but the Greeks, in different words, to all the three laſt ſyllables. Here were two Greek words, εἴδωλον and ἔρημος adopted into the Latin language. As long as they remained properly Greek, that is while they retained their Greek terminations, it was improper to pronounce them otherwiſe than as the Greeks did: the firſt ſyllable muſt have the acute accent, and the ſecond a long quantity. But as ſoon as they were latinized, by receiving Latin terminations, either the accent of the firſt ſyllable, or the quantity of the ſecond, muſt neceſſarily give way, and which alteration were the greater corruption? or can, whichſoever

cuſtom

cuſtom might eſtabliſh, be properly called a corruption? Indeed in a language of whoſe harmony quantity was the fundamental efficient, it would be moſt likely to happen that accent ſhould yield its place. It always did ſo with the elder Romans, and the contrary happening, in thoſe two inſtances at leaſt, in the days of Auſonius, affords a preſumption that, in his time, accent was beginning to make head againſt quantity in the harmony of the language he wrote in.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

THE intimate connection which with the ancients ſubſiſted between poetry and muſic, is a point which has baffled the moſt aſſiduous inquiries of ſo many men of the greateſt learning, as well as of the deepeſt knowlege of modern muſic, that raſhneſs will perhaps be imputed to the very idea of throwing new light upon it. If however the inveſtigation of the foregoing part of my ſubject has eſtabliſhed new principles which have an immediate reference to this obſcure point, it may not appear over preſumtuous to place theſe principles in ſuch a point of view that future inquirers may the more readily profit by them, ſo as to be aſſiſted, if not in making new diſcoveries, at leaſt in avoiding ſome of the ſtumbling-blooks which have diſgraced their predeceſſors. I ſhall do this the more readily, becauſe what little I have to ſay on the ſubject, will tend, if I miſtake not, both to confirm and to illuſtrate what is maintained in the foregoing pages.

It

It is but too true that there are many, even among the learned, always ready to affect contempt for what they cannot comprehend. Thus it has happened to the accentual marks of Ariſtophanes, and thus it has alſo happend to ancient muſic. A treatiſe lately publiſhed, intitled Principles and Power of Harmony, has however proved the reality of the excellence of ancient muſic ſo ſtrongly, that men of learning, who are alſo muſical men, will probably, be hereafter more aſhamed to ſpeak ſlightingly of it. The learned author is alſo not ſingular is his opinion; but ſo many have adopted the contrary notion that any argument or inquiry founded on a ſuppoſiton of the excellence of ancient muſic, ſeems almoſt to require an apology. It may not therefore be improper to inſert here a remark of a critic whoſe erudition, judgment, and candor have done equal honor to a neighboring nation, and which coincides perfectly with the opinions of the author of the treatiſe juſt mentioned. "It "is common at this day," ſays Mr. Dacier, in a note to his tranſlation of Plutarch's life of Lycurgus, "to eſteem the ancient accounts of "the ſurprizing effects of Grecian muſic mere "fables: but can we ſuppoſe that Plato, Ariſtotle,

" totle, Theophraſtus, Polybius, and all the
" graveſt and moſt judicious authors of antiquity
" would, by attributing to muſic effects
" which it never produced, expoſe themſelves
" to be detected in a lie by a whole peo-
" ple? Their muſic cannot but have been very
" ſuperior to ours both on account of the ad-
" vantage of their language, and the character
" of their genius; for it will be found, that in all
" countries the muſic has ever been proportioned
" to the genius and language of the people."

Little as we know concerning Grecian muſic, we are well aſſured of one eſſential point in which it differed from ours, and that is its intimate connection with poetry. With the Greeks muſic and verſe were almoſt inſeparable: with the moderns they ſeem to have ſcarcely any neceſſary connection. Among the former all improvements of muſic ſeem to have tended, or at leaſt to have been meant to heighten the expreſſion of poetry: among the latter every improvement of muſic has ſet it more at variance with the ſiſter arts, the labored harmonies of the laſt age, and the whimſical melodies and extravagant graces

of

of the preſent equally contribute to that effect. "In our churches" ſays the excellent Tartini in his treatiſe on muſic (I uſe the tranſlation of his commentator the author of Principles and Power of Harmony) "the miſerere mei Deus, is performed, and on the ſtage heroes and heroines go to death with the very fineſt muſical graces. It is well that cuſtom and habit do not give room for reflexion: however very little reflexion is ſufficient to turn all the pleaſure that can be received from the moſt perfect performance into the direct contrary.—Muſic alone, and ſeparated from any other conſideration whatever, is become our only aim and intention." And as the learned commentator himſelf obſerves. "As things go on at preſent, any notes will ſerve for any words: theſe are ſo frittered away that they ſeem rather the ghoſts of mangled words lingering and ſticking to the tongue like the ghoſts of wicked men, which, as Plato ſays, are frequently ſeen hovering about their tombs."

The laws of ancient poetry, and the nature of modern muſic are, for the purpoſe at leaſt of our preſent inquiry, ſufficiently known. It has been the object of the foregoing pages to explain the

the nature and laws of modern poetry, which had hitherto lain in an unaccountable perplexity. Without entering then into any diſquiſition of thoſe obſcure points concerning ancient muſic, which have remained yet unintelligible to the moſt learned and moſt ſedulous inquirers, let us juſt examine how far the knowlege of ancient poetry, of modern poetry, and of modern muſic, may lead to elucidate any connexion naturally ſubſiſting between verſe and muſic.

There is one moſt obvious circumſtance common to the mechaniſm of poetry and muſic, which they have alſo in common with dancing, with the ſmith's hammers of Pythagoras, and with the claſhing of ſwords and ſhields of the Idæi dactyli; and that is *cadence*. Modern muſic has like modern poetry only two different cadences.* By theſe the time is regularly divided, and they are generally known by the names of common and triple time. Now nothing is more certain, as Tartini's learned commentator obſerves, than that the giving of accented notes to

* The word *cadence* is uſed in a very different ſenſe by modern muſicians; but here, as throughout this eſſay, it is intended as ſynonymous with *rhythmus*.

accented ſyllables ought to be an inviolable rule in vocal muſic. But it is remarkable, that the only two cadences which our poetry knows, correſpond exactly with the only two cadences or diviſions of time uſed in muſic, the common and the triple. Theſe have, in their ſimpleſt ſtate, the former two, the other three equal notes in a bar, and the accent always on the firſt note of the bar. All the various ſubdiviſions of time uſed by modern muſicians are ſubordinate to theſe primary diviſions. Take then theſe two muſical cadences in their ſimpleſt form, the triple bar containing three equal notes, and the common bar two, and by the help of the unaccented notes which frequently precede the firſt complete bar of a ſtrain, the muſical accentuation may correſpond exactly with the poetical. Now theſe circumſtances actually meet in moſt of our old popular ballads; and the very learned and judicious author of *Principles and Power of Harmony* ſcruples not to prefer thoſe ſimple and deſpiſed compoſitions to the generality of the moſt labored pieces of the moſt admired modern maſters.

It is farther obſervable in our popular ballads (I hardly need ſcruple referring to theſe, after the teſtimony borne in their favor by Tartini, and

and his learned commentator) that as the common measure most naturally accommodates itself to common time, and the triple measure to triple time, so an exactly equal division of both times will, in general, and for a continuance, accord better with the poetical measures than any unequal division, however preferable this may be on particular occasions and for variety. But the triple measure, tho sometimes set to common time with due regard to the accentuation, will yet by no means fall into its movements with the same ease and simplicity; and when common measure is set to triple time with due regard to the accentuation, in which case the musical bar will consist of two notes, one just double in quantity to the other, it matters not whether the long note be placed in the accented or unaccented part of the bar, but is only requisite that the accented note be assigned to the accented syllable. I assert this on the authority of the practice of our best musicians, and of my own observation, as far as it goes, that the best ears are not offended with it. Hence then it is evident, were there no other proof, that our triple measure is not, as it is commonly called, anapestic, and that our common measure, even in its simplest form, accented regularly on alternate syllables, is not iambic: for if the triple

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meaſure were anapeſtic it would not accord with triple time, but would require common time with alternately two ſhort notes, and a long note equal in quantity to the two ſhort ones; and if the common meaſure were iambic it would accommodate itſelf moſt readily to triple time with alternately a ſhort note, and a long note double in quantity to the ſhort one; the contrary of both which is notoriouſly fact.

Having then aſcertained the grand bond of union between poetry and muſic, which is cadence, we may eaſily diſcover many inferior circumſtances of their connexion; and in this connexion we may find an explanation of ſome ſeeming paradoxes in verſification, otherwiſe inexplicable.

Modern muſic and modern poetry agree in that neither will admit the intermixture of the two cadences: the even and the triple foot can no more appear in the ſame verſe than common and triple time in the ſame muſical ſtrain. It is common indeed in muſic to introduce three equal notes in the time of two equal notes; but then they never form more than a diviſion of the cadence; half the common bar at moſt and one third

third of the triple. An anomalous intermixture of diſſyllabic and triſſyllabic feet is alſo common in our old minſtrel ſongs, and diſſyllabic feet are ſometimes introduced in modern poems on ludicrous ſubjects in triple meaſure, and without materially hurting the harmony. To account for this we muſt recur to the analogy between the muſical and poetical cadences. Two equal notes will alone mark the common cadence; but melt them together ſo as to form one holding note, as the muſicians term it, and no particular cadence, or muſical time will be characterized; for this holding note may equally well be analyſed into three equal notes, and become a triple bar, as remain a common bar by its compoſition of two equal notes. But if inſtead of melting the notes together you divide one of them, the cadence is ſtill marked with as much certainty as when they remained two equal notes. Three equal notes again will mark the triple cadence. Form a holding note of all three, and you deſtroy all diſtinguiſhing character of cadence, juſt as in the former caſe: but if you form two of them only into a holding note, the cadence is ſtill characterized almoſt as ſtrongly as when all were diſtinct. But if inſtead of melting two of the three notes into one, you divide one of them into two, you then enter upon a much more complex diviſion

of

of the cadence: a diviſion ſtill ſimple enough in muſic, becauſe muſical notes unconnected with language, are ſimple ſounds; but too complex for poetry, becauſe moſt poetical notes are complex ſounds, formed of all thoſe elementary ſounds of which ſyllables are compoſed. Here then appears the reaſon why verſes of the even cadence readily admit the addition of a ſyllable, but will never ſpare a ſyllable; and why, on the contrary, verſes of the triple cadence will readily ſpare a ſyllable, but will not ſo well admit an extraordinary one.

The ancient Saxon poetry ſeems to be all in triple meaſure. In a barbarous age, and with an unpoliſhed language this meaſure appears to have been preferred for theſe reaſons; becauſe, proſe running moſtly in common meaſure, the triple more readily throws language out of proſe; and becauſe the triple meaſures have the convenience of admitting more irregularity in the number of ſyllables belonging to each cadence. The alliterating poets and riming minſtrels ſometimes carried this irregularity to ſuch exceſs as to deſtroy all harmony. Some of them appear indeed to have conſidered rime and alliteration almoſt as ſubſtitutes for that harmony even now

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diſcernible in the remains of the old Saxon poets. The alliterators evidently aimed at ſome degree of the ſame harmony, yet ſeem to have depended chiefly upon alliteration and the pauſe, the former of which was with the Saxons, according to Dr. Percy himſelf, but an inferior and an occaſional ornament. The moderns have run rather into the contrary extreme. Having for the general purpoſes of poetry adopted the common cadence, the beſt and the moſt difficult to excel in, becauſe the moſt ſimple in its fundamental principles, yet capable of the greateſt variety both of harmony and expreſſion, they have preſcribed themſelves in one inſtance ſtricter bounds than ſeem neceſſary; they ſcrupulouſly number their ſyllables, while they are wholly inattentive to meter, which can alone furniſh the proper means of introducing variety in the number of ſyllables. Where this is irregular, and meter diſregarded, circumſtances which meet perpetually in the works of the minſtrels and alliterating poets, the voice is under a neceſſity of dwelling upon ſome ſyllables, of hurrying over others, and always of ſtrengthening the accent which determines the cadence, in a manner that cannot but diſguſt in compoſitions where elegance and preciſion are expected. Without either

proper

proper meter, or ſuch aſſiſtance from the voice, an alteration in the number of ſyllables will alter the cadence, conſequently break the flow of the voice, and reduce it to proſe. I would not however be underſtood that our accentual verſification will by means of meter admit all the varieties of the ancient metrical verſification: I am ſatisfied that it cannot. But Milton's poetry, and even the verſes of the old minſtrels and alliterators ſhow ſufficiently that it will admit ſome of thoſe varieties.

Modern muſic and modern poetry agree moreover in that very remarkable circumſtance of the triple cadence, its equal, and almoſt peculiar fitneſs for the expreſſion of mirth, even to riot, and of tranquil melancholy even to deſpondency. Triple time gives the jig for the former, and the Sicilian movement for the latter. If we would have in triple time almoſt any other muſical expreſſion than theſe, and what elſe is proper to the paſtoral muſe, we muſt recur to a more complex diviſion of the cadence. This circumſtance perhaps made the irregularities in the verſification of our Saxon anceſtors, and the old alliterating poets, in ſome meaſure neceſſary.

According

According to the analogy between the muſical and the poetical cadences, it might ſeem moſt proper to conſider the accented ſyllable as firſt inſtead of laſt of the accentual foot, in the even meaſures as well as in the triple, and particularly in the colorhythmic. The method I have followed is however much more generally convenient for the purpoſes of poetical analyſis; it appears in ſome reſpects even more proper, and in all without any material objection.

With regard to accentuation then, our muſical compoſers have generally followed nature as cloſely as the Greeks could; a point which ſeems to have eſcaped the notice of all who have hitherto written on the ſubject. This is not only obſervable in popular ballads of uncertain origin, but in the compoſitions of all our beſt muſicians from Henry Lawes to the preſent time. It is needleſs to produce inſtances, becauſe, to the unmuſical they were unintelligible, and the muſical may find them every where. In many ſongs of our beſt compoſers much contrivance may be obſerved to make the poetical and muſical accents agree, where in the former there happen to be any of thoſe irregularities which our proſody admits. But as the compoſer has in this point never

never been ſubject to any rule, but guided by his ear and his diſcretion only, we ſometimes find the muſical accents at variance with the poetical even in the works of our moſt judicious muſicians.

With regard to meter the caſe is very different. It ſeems evident that in the original formation of of the accentual poetical cadences, whether from the muſical cadences, or whenceſoever elſe derived, no regard was had to the quantities of ſyllables, but that in the firſt connexion of accentual verſe with muſic, every ſyllable was allowed an equal portion of time. This is apparent in our old ballad tunes, where the little varieties that ſometimes occur, contribute not in the leaſt to accomodate the muſical notes to the quantities of ſyllables, but are calculated merely to prevent a tireſome ſameneſs in the progreſſion of the muſical notes, or to give ſpirit or expreſſion to a particular part of the air. In later times, the ſcience of muſic improving, and the taſte for it becoming more refined, the muſician, who is generally with us a mere muſician, whenever difficulties occurred, or an opportunity offered to embelliſh the muſic, even at the expence of the poetry, would give muſic the preference,

and

and thus in the end, as Tartini obſerves, "muſic "alone, ſeparated from any other conſideration "whatever, would become his only aim and in-"tention." Propoſing muſic then as genus, ſpecies, and individual, to uſe the ſame writer's expreſſion, he would ſtill find that unleſs ſome attention were paid to the accents, it would diſagree with the poetry in manner to give the higheſt diſguſt; but that with regard to the quantities, he was at a liberty to which he might preſcribe his own bounds. The uſe that has been made of this liberty is well known.

Ignorant as we are concerning numberleſs circumſtances of Greek muſic, and wholly without examples, we can do little more than gueſs at the nature of its connexion with poetry in many particulars, and ſome difficulties we can ſcarcely ſolve by any ſuppoſition. Of all the writers on the ſubject Tartini was by his uncommon genius, great judgment, and unwearied application, united with his very ſuperior knowlege of muſic, the moſt peculiarly qualified for it. But Tartini had unfortunately no idea of the diſtinction between accent and quantity in language; and in conſequence of confounding thoſe two circumſtances in language, of whoſe

wide

wide difference in muſic, he had the cleareſt knowlege, he begins his obſervations on the connexion between the muſic and the poetry of the Greeks with the moſt extraodinary aſſertion imaginable: he declares that to be an undeniable fact in ſpeech, which cannot but be equally in ſpeech as in muſic a natural impoſſibility; namely, that a ſhort muſical note has in ſinging a long quantity if it occurs in the accented part of the muſical bar.* With ſuch a miſtake in his outſet, to get to the end of the labyrinth was impracticable; and yet, in compariſon of what others had done, he has gone not a little way. I ſhall lay before the reader ſuch paſſages of his work as are to my purpoſe, from the tranſlation of his able commentator.

"The muſical modes of the ancients were ſo "rigorouſly joined to the proſody that the people "could diſcover the miſtakes, if there were any, "committed by the muſical poet, in the length "and ſhortneſs of ſyllables, both in relation "to the poetry and muſic. This is a point of "hiſtory in which all writers agree." Sec. 97.

"You

* See his Trattato di Muſica, p. 115.

" You will aſk me if, it is really poſſible to " preſerve rigorouſly in muſic the quantity of " ſyllables? I anſwer, that it is poſſible, not " only in the genus, but in the ſpecies and in- " dividual alſo; becauſe in the value of muſical " notes there is every thing neceſſary for the " purpoſe. Nevertheleſs we muſt diſtinguiſh; " either the value of the ſyllable is taken with " the utmoſt rigor, or with latitude: If with " rigor, it is paſt all doubt that one long ſyllable " is equal to two ſhort ones, juſt as a minim is " equal to two half minims, and one of theſe is " equal to a crotchet, &c." ' Tartini then ſub- ' joins an inſtance of the rigorous method in a ' verſe of Virgil, ſet to notes both in common ' and triple time.'

" With theſe examples," ſays he, " I mean " nothing more than to ſhow what progreſs of " muſical notes reſults in each of theſe times, " when they are reduced rigorouſly to the value " of the ſyllables. But I do not pretend that " the ſyllables, diſpoſed in ſuch a manner by the " meaſure or bar, ſhould correſpond exactly to " the ſenſe of the muſic, as would follow from " what was ſaid in the preceding chapter relating " to the long and ſhort accents of the meaſure.

Whether

" Whether this was the practice of the Greeks " is more than I know; but something like it " must have been the case by absolute necessity, " if it was necessary that the long syllables " should be distinguished from the short in their " music. But my opinion is, that the measure " among the Greeks was observed not rigorously, " but with discretion. If they were real imi- " tators of nature, and if by means of poetry " joined with music, they raised and calmed the " passions, they must of necessity have atten- " ded to what happens in common discourse. " When this is animated by passion, the natural " effect is, in proportion to the passion, a greater " or less inflexion of the voice; a greater or less " pitch, and force of tone; a greater or less " lengthening of words and syllables, &c. In " the expression a word of more significance oc- " curs: This, without any reflexion is placed " in a stronger point of light than others, by " hurrying over it, if the passion is anger; by " dwelling on it if the passion is grief, &c."

" The musical poet, if he was also a philoso- " pher, being obliged to conform to nature, must " have met with many cases where the long syl- " lables ought to be lengthened, the short syl-

lables

" lables ſhortened, without regard to their rigorous
" natural value, in order to expreſs the paſſions
" properly; and that in compariſon with the
" natural value of other ſyllables, which were
" not ſubſervient to the paſſion, unleſs in pre-
" paring the mind for it. A diſcretionary there-
" fore, and not a rigorous regard to bars was
" neceſſary: If ſo, their muſic reſembled the
" recitative of our Italian operas, in which the
" bars are diſcretionary; nay it can hardly be
" perceived that there are any bars at all. Thus
" it ought to be if we undertake to imitate the
" nature of any paſſion; which however con-
" ſtant it may be, will not admit of having its
" motions, which by their nature are unequal,
" regulated by equality. No ſeries therefore of
" equal bars can correſpond to ſuch an idea:
" nay the change of time from common to triple,
" or the contrary, cannot correſpond to it, be-
" cauſe in all the variations of time there is ſtill
" the equality of movements that conſtitute the
" time. In ſimple narration there may be e-
" quality of movements, and conſequently there
" may be regular bars rigorouſly obſerved. But
" if it is true, as I think it is, that in order to
" affect others we muſt be ourſelves affected,
" there are very few narrative parts which if we

" fol-

" follow nature, will admit of being regulated
" by an equal movement; becauſe there are few
" ſuch parts totally free from paſſion."

" I am confirmed in my opinion, by obſerving
" that diſcretionary meaſure not only can never
" be of prejudice to the value of ſyllables, but
" on the contrary helps infinitely to determine
" their quality, if we attend to one rule only,
" which is to give in every caſe at leaſt a double
" quantity of time to a long ſyllable, in propor-
" tion to what is given to the ſhort one. Who
" can doubt, if to the word Barbara a minim
" and two crotchets are ſet, whereby the dactyl
" is rigorouſly expreſſed as to time, and to the
" ſame word a minim and two quavers are ſet,
" which is the diſcretionary time; but that the
" firſt ſyllable is long, the like may be ſaid of
" the two ſhort ſyllables? on the contrary we
" ſhall be more certain of the value of the ſylla-
" bles in the ſecond way than in the firſt. Hence
" ariſes an infinite advantage to the muſical poet
" for imitating nature with the greateſt eaſe, and
" if we, having the ſame end in view ſhould fol-
" low this method, why will we imagine the
" Greeks did otherwiſe? Sect. 99, 100, 101,
" 102."

" I ſhould

"I ſhould be apt to think that among the "ancient (Italian) ſongs there are ſome genuine "ones according to the example of the Greeks, "if it was not for the intire contraſt between the "muſic and the proſody. It muſt be owned that "there are ſome ſo full of gravity, majeſty and "ſweetneſs, joined to the moſt perfect muſical "ſimplicity, that we moderns ſhould find it a "very hard taſk to rival them. An inquiry into "their date is of little importance; their muſical "nature is all we want. It is certain then that "they were made for a ſingle voice: If this "voice was multiplied by the uniſons of a whole "people, that does not derogate from the deſign "of the inſtitution; becauſe uniſon is, in its "ratio, only one voice: that they are ſimple in "the higheſt degree: that they partake of the "nature of recitative, but largo: that many of "them are like canzoni, or ſongs, many of a "mixt nature: that none are confined to regular "bars but diſcretionary; and that in each of "them the key is determined, and is limited by "a convenient extent as to grave and acute. "This idea, is in general conformable to nature, "and with regard to the univerſality of circum-"ſtances it is impoſſible to contrive with more-"ſimplicity; nor could the Greeks themſelves "have contrived or intended otherwiſe.,'

Thus far Tartini. The foregoing part of this eſſay leads naturally to a few farther remarks.

The ancients reckoned in their ſpeech three different cadences; the even, which is the ſame with common time in our muſic; the double, which is the ſame with our triple time; and the ſeſcuplex, which we ſhould, by analogy, perhaps rather call quincuple time, as it would make a bar of five equal notes. Quintilian informs us that the ſeſcuplex rhythmus was moſt proper for proſe, becauſe improper for poetry.* This ſeems to deſerve the conſideration of thoſe who would introduce this time into our muſic.

It is obvious, ſuppoſing Tartini's idea of the muſic of the Greeks to be juſt, that it could not be difficult to ſet their lyric poetry with the ſtricteſt regard to quantity. It is more difficult to conceive how the muſical accents were made to conſiſt with the irregular diſpoſition of the accents in Greek verſe. There is a paſſage in Dionyſius which ſeems to indicate, that the analogy between the accents of muſic, and the accents

* And Ariſtotle ſays of it ἀπὸ μόνου ἂν εἴη μέτρου τῶν ῥηθέντων ῥυθμῶν.

cents of ſpeech, was of a different kind with them and with us: "Muſic," he ſays, "makes words "ſubſervient to melody, not melody to words. "This may be ſeen in many inſtances, and parti- "cularly in the lyrics of Euripides, where in the "tragedy of Oreſtes he makes Electra ſay to the "chorus,

Σῖγα; σῖγα; λευκὸν ἴχνος ἀρβύλης
Τιθεῖτε, μὴ κτυπεῖτε.
Ἀποπρόβατ' ἐκεῖσ'; ἀπόπροθι κοίτας.

"For here theſe ſix ſyllables Σῖγα, σῖγα, λευκὸν, "are all ſung with the ſame tone, tho each of the "three words has one ſyllable grave, the other "acute. In the word ἀρβύλης alſo the ſame "tone is given to the third ſyllable, as to the "ſecond, tho it is an abſolute ſoleciſm in pro- "nunciation, for one word to have two acutes. "In the ſame manner in the word τιθεῖτε the firſt "ſyllable has a graver note, the other two the "ſame acute note. In κτυπεῖτε the circumflex "is annihilated, for here again two ſyllables "have the ſame tone: and in ἀποπρόβατε "the middle ſyllable does not receive the acute "accent, but the tone of the third is given to

"the

"the rourth *." Now in ſetting our poetry to muſic, it never yet I believe was thought neceſſary, that higher notes be aſſigned to acuted than to grave ſyllables, but merely that the ſyllables which receive the ſtrongeſt accents be given to the accented part of the muſical bar. It appears however from this paſſage, that the Greek muſicians were not always ſo ſcrupulous in accommodating notes to the proper tones of words; and from what follows, it ſeems they ſometimes took great liberties with the meter alſo. The whole paſſage is indeed, as far as it goes, a pretty exact picture of modern vocal muſic, and ſeems

* Ἡ δὲ ὀργανικὴ τε καὶ ᾠδικὴ μῦσα—τάς τε λέξεις τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑπολάπτειν ἀξιοῖ, καὶ ὲ τὰ μέλη ταῖς λέξεσιν ὡς ἐξ ἄλλων τὶ πολλῶν δῆλον, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν Ἐυριπίδη μελῶν, ἃ πεποίηκε τὴν Ἠλέκτραν λέγουσαν ἐν Ὀρέστῃ πρὸς τὸν χορὸν·

Σῖγα, σῖγα, λευκὸν ἴχνος ἀρβύλης
Τιθεῖτε, μὴ κτυπεῖτε.
Ἀποπρόβατ' ἐκεῖσ', ἀπότροθι πώτας.

Ἐν γὰρ δὴ τούτοις, το Σῖγα, σῖγα λευκὸν, ἐφ' ἑνὸς φθόγγου μελῳδεῖται, καί τοι τῶν τριῶν λέξεων ἑκάστη βαρείας τε τάσεις ἔχει καὶ ὀξείας. καὶ το Ἀρβύλης, ἐπὶ μέσῃ συλλαβῇ τὴν τρίτην ὁμότονον ἔχει, ἀμηχάνως ὄλος ἓν ὄνομα δύο λαβεῖν ὀξείας. καὶ τῷ Τιθεῖτε βαρυτέρα μὲν ἡ πρώτη γίνεται, δύο δὲ μετ' αὐτὴν ὀξύτονοί τε καὶ ὁμόφωνοι. τῷ Κτυπεῖτε ὁ περισπασμὸς φαίνεται. μιᾷ γὰρ αἱ δύο συλλαβαὶ λέγονται τάσει. Καὶ τὸ Ἀποπρόβατε ὲ λαμβάνει τὴν της μέσης συλλαβῆς προσῳδίαν ὀξεῖαν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ την τετάρτην συλλαβὴν καταβέβηκεν ὲ τάσις τῆς τρίτης. περὶ συνθ. ιχ.

ſeems on firſt view, to make not a little againſt Tartini's ideas of Greek muſic. Yet perhaps when all things are well conſidered, the repugnance will vaniſh: at leaſt no difficulty will remain, but what may be removed by ſuppoſition, and probability is all we can look for. When for inſtance, Dionyſius tells us that the accents were not expreſſed in the ſame manner in muſic as in common ſpeech, it were apparently no unfair concluſion, that this was no more neceſſary in Greek than in modern muſic; and perhaps all the irregularities concerning meter to which he alludes, might come within the bounds of Tartini's diſcretionary meaſure.

Not however to involve myſelf in theſe intricacies, it is certain that the nature of the harmony of every language muſt determine the manner of the connexion of its poetry with muſic; and the nature of this connexion muſt ſtrongly affect the character of the muſic itſelf. Now the Greek poetry depending not at all upon the ſtrokes of accent for determining its rhythmus, but merely upon ſpace of time, marked only by the various ſounds of various ſyllables, could not require ſuch muſical accents ſo accommodated to the accentuation of words as modern languages de-

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mand. Hence it is highly probable that Tartini is right in ſuppoſing the Greek muſic was not divided by regular bars like ours, and it ſeems moreover probable, that if any bars were uſed, they were not diſtinguiſhed by that accent or emphaſis which our muſic has on the firſt note of every bar. The invention of bars, or at leaſt of the mark of them, ſeems not very ancient. It appears not unlikely that the importance of accentuation to poetry in the modern European languages, gave riſe to that characteriſtic mark of our muſic the emphatical accent on the firſt note of every bar, and this circumſtance would naturally lead to the preſent regularity of our bars.

From the mere difference then in the connexion of their poetry with their muſic, if on no other account, the muſic of the Greeks muſt have differed widely from ours. And as there is the ſtrongeſt reaſon to ſuppoſe that their vocal muſic was greatly ſuperior to the beſt modern, ſo there ſeems little room to doubt but the modern inſtrumental muſic is ſuperior to any they poſſeſſed; and that this ſuperiority ariſes not merely from the cauſe commonly aſſigned, the ſuperiority of our inſtruments. It is indeed repugnant,

pugnant to all modern ideas of muſic purely inſtrumental, to ſuppoſe that any could exiſt upon the plan of their vocal muſic; yet that they had inſtrumental muſic, and good inſtrumental muſic, cannot be doubted *. But we ſee no leſs a muſician than Tartini, almoſt aſſerting that the moderns have no vocal muſic. Where indeed words are mere modes of ſound, the voice is a mere inſtrument, and there can be no muſic rationally vocal.

But how little connexion ſoever poetry and muſic may have in the works of modern compoſers, their original affinity is no leſs evident in the accentual than in the metrical verſification, tho it is perhaps not of the ſame degree. Poetry, as we have obſerved, has two cadences ſimilar to the cadences of muſic. The Greeks, endowed with uncommon delicacy of ear, and uſing a moſt harmonious pronunciation, meaſured their poetical

* Καὶ νὴ Δία φθόγγοι πιθάρας, ὑδὲν ἁπλῶς σημαίνοντες, ταῖς τῶν ἤχων μεταβολαῖς, καὶ τῇ πρὸς ἀλλήλους κρούσει καὶ μίξει τῆς συμφωνίας θαυμαστὸν ἐπάγουσι πολλάκις, ὡς ἔπισασιν. θέλγητρον. Longin. 39.—Etiam organis, quibus ſermo exprimi non poteſt, affici animos in diverſum habitum ſentiamus. Quinctil. Inſt. or. I 10.—Illi quoque organorum ſoni, quanquam verba non exprimunt, in alios tamen atque alios motus ducerent audjtorem. Id. IX. 4.

poetical cadences like muſical cadences by ſpace of time only. This ſpace they ſubdivided into thoſe ſmaller portions of time which are employed in the pronunciation of ſyllables, and by which feet are conſtituted. Muſical cadences are in the ſame manner, variouſly divided into notes of different length, only that muſic admits ſubdiviſions again of ſubdiviſions. Their verſe is made by a certain number of feet arranged in a certain order. It was not ſufficient for the Gothic tribes, whoſe language and feelings were equally more coarſe, to meaſure the ſpace of time in their poetical cadences, unleſs it was alſo marked by the emphatical accent. Hence followed two very material conſequences: firſt, meter as diſtinguiſhed from cadence, was effectually excluded from being a fundamental circumſtance of their verſification; and ſecondly to cadence itſelf a ſtrict attention to proportionate ſpace of time was leſs requiſite.

In this view the difference between ancient and modern verſification appears in the cleareſt light poſſible. The former depended upon cadences as genera, and upon meters as ſpecies. The latter depends upon cadence only. Hence the metrical verſification admitted ſo many different forms of verſe, in the ſame manner as muſic admits

mits many various diſpoſitions of longer and ſhorter notes; and hence the accentual verſification is confined to thoſe two varieties, which the two cadences give. The biſhop of Oxford obſerves that the extreme ſimplicity in the conſtruction of of the Engliſh language has probably been the cauſe that we were ſo long without a regular grammar. Perhaps to a cauſe of the ſame kind may juſtly be imputed the want of ſyſtem in modern verſification, for ſo many centuries, and in ſo many countries and languages.

From the foregoing obſervations ſome concluſions may be drawn, which, tho rather differing from opinions commonly held, ſeem yet pretty certain.

It appears in the firſt place, that as our poetical harmony differs in its fundamental principle from that of the Greeks and Romans, ſo the connexion between muſic and poetry cannot depend on the ſame laws with us and with them.

It ſeems moreover not in the nature of our poetry, to unite itſelf ſo cloſely with ſuch muſic as ſhall at the ſame time excite or appeaſe the paſſions, give the higheſt ſatisfaction to the ear,

and

and not only conſiſt with, but illuſtrate the harmony of the verſe. What connexion ſubſiſted between the accents of muſic and thoſe of ſpeech among the Greeks, does not, that I know, appear from any of their writings. Whatever it might be, it ſeems not likely to have been any great confinement to their muſical melodies; and their poetical meters were purpoſely adapted to ſuch muſical meaſures as were equally ſuited to touch the paſſions and delight the ear. Hence the various powers which we are informed their various poetical meaſures poſſeſſed independently of muſic: powers of which we can be little ſenſible for this plain reaſon, becauſe it is impoſſible for us to give to Greek verſe its juſt pronunciation. It ſhould ſeem farther, that the character which this circumſtance gave to their muſic was the cauſe why with them muſic had no connexion with language but by means of verſification. Of ſetting proſe to muſic, which has ſucceeded ſo well with us, they appear to have had no conception.

If we would follow nature at all in ſetting either poetry or proſe to muſic, we muſt pay implicit regard to the accentuation of words: but I imagine it not poſſible for the muſician at the

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ſame time to accommodate the time of his notes to the meter, ſcarcely in our ſtile of muſic, even if the meter were regulated by laws as ſtrict as thoſe of the Greek lyriſts.

If this be allowed it follows, that our later muſicians have by no means deſerved all the cenſure with which various writers have loaded them. A laudable ambition to make their own art, muſic merely as muſic, more pleaſing and affecting, firſt led them to deviate from the ſimple path of their predeceſſors. They found the poetry, perhaps of all the modern European languages, not ſufficiently adapted to that intimate union with muſic which many of them probably wiſhed to accompliſh. They ran, it muſt be owned, into great extravagances; but theſe, and new extravagances often have that good fortune, received the ſanction of public applauſe. In proceſs of time however, the fate of all faſhions has attended them; they are now in a great meaſure exploded, the compoſers' extravagances having given way to another ſet of extravagances which depend chiefly on the performer, and are commonly called graces. Theſe are alſo now generally condemned, and with great reaſon. Yet amid all theſe extravagances will be found a cloſer connexion between the muſical and poetical

accen-

accentuation than moſt ſeem aware of. A good muſician cannot but have an ear for poetical harmony, and with that he ſcarcely could offend in any great degree againſt the poetical accentuation. In very ſlow movements indeed, or where a very complex diviſion of the time is uſed, the muſical accentuation being leſs ſtrongly marked, its adaption to the poetical is leſs attended to; but in the beſt ſongs of the more ſimple kind, Engliſh as well as Italian; in the beſt comic operas; in the works of Piccini in particular, and, I may add in the Padlock of our countryman Dibden, there is perhaps in general nearly as cloſe a connexion between the muſic and the poetry, and as much expreſſion in the former as the preſent ſtate of European verſification will admit. Tartini therefore had good reaſon to ſay, "Produce me a poet, who is alſo a philoſopher, "and will perform his part: then, and not till "then, I, even I, will undertake as a muſician "to perform mine:" that is, by the union of poetry with muſic, to work all the effects which we are aſſured were produced by the great Greek muſicians, in whom the three characters, of muſician, poet and philoſopher were commonly united.

DID

DID the foregoing obſervations concern the Engliſh language only, neglected as that has been, I ſhould neither think I had done much in explaining its harmony, nor be very ſolicitous about the conſequences of having maintained different opinions from thoſe who had attempted the ſame thing before me. But when I conſider the numberleſs paſſages of ancient authors which have hitherto puzzled the moſt laborious of the learned, and which this eſſay, if its principles be juſt, will make perfectly eaſy; when I conſider the number and the reputation of the modern writers whoſe tenets it flatly contradicts; when I conſider that it is calculated to teach the moſt learned what they have hitherto ſo much ſought in vain, and what ſome of them have grown old in attempting to teach others; when I view the wide field which it opens for explaining the harmony of all living languages, and for new conjectures concerning that of thoſe which are no longer ſpoken, I am abaſhed at the thought of having taken ſo much upon myſelf. Yet on the other hand, when I conſider that in what relates to the learned languages I am ſupported by every paſſage of every author with which my little reading has brought me acquainted; and that from the ſobereſt conviction of my

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ſenſes I have not the leaſt reaſon to doubt of what I have advanced in general relating to our own language, I am emboldened to ſubmit my opinions to public conſideration. I am very ſenſible that the inaccuracies and incompleteneſs of the work will afford ample room to exerciſe the candor of the reader. Yet if he be of a diſpoſition to be entertained by any inquiries of the kind, and rather to deſire new matter for thought than to demand complete information about every thing, without the trouble of thinking for himſelf, I do not deſpair but he may have found what will in a great meaſure attone for every defect. If the work ſhould appear ſo far deſerving of favor as to require a ſecond edition, I ſhall eſteem myſelf highly obliged to any who will communicate, thro the bookſeller, ſuch remarks as may tend to render it in any reſpect more worthy of public attention.

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